

Snooker

King Hendry the sixth takes crown

David Hopps in Sheffield

STEPHEN HENDRY'S inexorable progress to a record-equalling sixth Embassy World Championship owed as much to his formidable reputation as to the quality of his performance.

In equalling the six titles won in modern times by Steve Davis and Ray Reardon, the 27-year-old Scot rarely located his best form. But he rarely needed to. His 18-12 victory over Peter Ebdon, clinched by four out of six frames in an undistinguished final session at the Crucible Theatre on Monday, routinely did for an opponent who looked spent after his earlier heroics.

Those who dismiss Hendry as boring surely miss an essential truth. For world-class sportsmen of his ilk, suppression can be as intriguing as expression. Beneath an exterior as obdurate as a dam wall, the waters are still thrashing. Though odds-on favourite before the tournament began, he was dissatisfied with his form throughout but mentally he remained unparalleled.

"I wasn't on the top of my form, but I still won," he said. "As long as I keep getting a buzz from the big tournaments I think I have another two or three titles in me."

His last defeat here had come against Steve James in the 1991 quarter-finals, and three of his six winning finals had been against Jimmy White, whose celebrated potting ability collapsed under the pressure. This year the whirlwind was replaced by an irksome breeze in the shape of Ebdon, an English opponent who might have been designed to get under his skin.

Ebdon's theatrical behaviour — he collapsed in a heap of fake exhaustion after beating Davis and had been prone to bellowing "Come on!" at himself after winning a close frame — is as far removed from Hendry's persona as one can get.

He also knows how to work a crowd. While Hendry strove to be oblivious to their presence, Ebdon indulged in occasional exchanges. A perfect break-off shot, which left Hendry snookered, saw him stretch out his arms as if inviting adulation, which he duly received.

He favours multi-coloured waistcoats that could be used to tune in a television set whenever the test card is unavailable. Monday afternoon's was a grey and gold number which, after 17 days under the Crucible lights, matched his pallid colouring and the bags under his staring eyes.

Hendry's bags normally have money in them. This season he has earned about £1 million, plus another £1.5 million in endorsements. He has also played the occasional round of golf with his fellow Scotman, Kenry Dalgligh, a striking marriage of unyielding minds. One imagines that, whenever Hendry and Dalgligh both stare over a short putt, the ball will drop into the hole of its own accord.

Motor Racing San Marino Grand Prix

Heavy-duty Hill scores clever win

Alan Henry at Imola

DAMON HILL won the San Marino Grand Prix in fine style here on Sunday with a superbly disciplined drive that stoned for his disappointing result at the Nürburgring. His Williams took the chequered flag 16.4sec ahead of Michael Schumacher's Ferrari. Gerhard Berger's Benetton was third, with Eddie Irvine fourth in the second Ferrari.

It was Hill's fourth win out of five races this season and maintained Williams' unbeaten run this year. It also extended Hill's world championship lead over his team-mate Jacques Villeneuve to 21 points, the

Canadian having to retire late on with suspension damage. Villeneuve's problems began early. His car was rammed twice by Jean Alesi's Benetton at the start, so hard that the European GP winner had to stop at the end of the opening lap to replace a deflated tyre.

The finishing order was not quite the Italian triumph anticipated by the 130,000 crowd but two Ferraris in the points was a good result by any standards. It could easily have been worse, for one of Schumacher's hard-pressed brake-discs exploded midway round the final lap and he just limped across the finishing line.

Hill said later: "We have some

very talented people here at Williams. They did a brilliant job this weekend." It was an acknowledgment that his victory owed as much to well-judged team tactics as to his own precision behind the wheel.

The plan on Sunday was to give Hill's car a heavy fuel load from the start so that he could produce maximum performance when it counted, later in the race. He sat back in third place, content to bide his time as David Coulthard's McLaren-Mercedes, fourth on the grid, set the early pace ahead of Schumacher, who had qualified in pole position.

Hill had to take it easy on the brakes at this stage but his refuelling stops on laps 30 and 50 of the 61-lap contest were relatively small, giving his car maximum agility to lap the back-markers.

Schumacher's early strategy was slightly hampered by Coulthard, who made a brilliant start. The Scot led until his first refuelling stop, at the end of lap 20. Schumacher took over the lead but Hill, by staying out of the pits until lap 30, was able to take a decisive advantage he never relinquished.

Coulthard held third place for several laps before stalling on his second refuelling stop and eventually pulling up with hydraulic problems on lap 45, but it was the first time a McLaren had led a world championship race since the 1981 Spanish GP, where Mika Hakkinen briefly set the pace in their Peugeot-engined car.



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The Washington Post & Monday



Holding fire... Bangladeshi tanks came out on the streets of Dhaka on Tuesday following a night of tension after the house arrest of the sacked army chief. Full story, page 3

Iraq accepts UN oil for food deal

Ian Black in London, Mark Tran in New York and Agencies

THE international stranglehold on Iraq loosened on Monday when Saddam Hussein agreed to a United Nations plan to allow him to sell oil to buy food and medicine for his suffering people.

The United States and Britain — anticipating that Baghdad would present the deal as a prelude to a wider relaxation of sanctions and Iraq's eventual rehabilitation — insisted sanctions would remain.

The White House hailed the deal as an "important victory" for the UN while Malcolm Rifkind, the British Foreign Secretary, said sanctions were unlikely to be lifted while President Saddam remained in power.

"I feel great," said Iraq's chief negotiator, Abdul Amir al-Anbari, before he left New York on Monday. "At last our efforts have been fruitful."

The agreement, under UN Resolution 986, allows Baghdad to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months and buy food, which is to be distributed under strict international supervision.

President Saddam's decision to accept it after years of insulted rejection and months of futile negotiation is a calculated *soltfa* he hopes will boost his position, even though his enemies mean to use it to keep him quiet.

Washington and London say sanctions must stay until Baghdad pays compensation to victims of the Gulf war, releases all prisoners, and co-operates with the UN commission tracking down Iraq's arsenal of missiles and nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

The pact is expected to reduce petrol prices worldwide. It will go some way to defusing criticism of the maintenance of the oil embargo even though civilians have borne the brunt of its impact and President Saddam's position remains entrenched.

In Baghdad, Iraqis embraced each other and fired shots into the air while barefooted children in shabby clothes danced in the street after the news was announced on Baghdad radio. The local currency, the dinar, soared at the first signs of economic relief for the country's 20 million people.

"It's an excellent day for the Iraqi people," said Madeleine Albright, the US ambassador to the UN.

In Washington, the White House spokesman, Mike McCurry, called the agreement "long overdue" and a victory in meeting the needs of the Iraqi people.

In London, the exiled opposition Iraqi National Congress welcomed the agreement but urged caution "to prevent Saddam from cheating or twisting the resolution to strengthen his regime".

Diplomats said that President Saddam might try to divert existing resources from illicit oil sales to finance arms purchases.

One negative voice came from Senator Bob Dole, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, who said the Clinton administration had caved in to the UN and made "Saddam Hussein an offer he could not refuse". Dole's criticism was the first public one since the oil for food deal was offered in a 1991 resolution under the administration of President George Bush.

The UN memorandum on the deal goes into detail about the inspection of shipments to Iraq and the monitoring of local markets. It provides for visits to hospitals, clinics, pharmaceutical plants, and water and sanitation facilities.

About 30 per cent of oil revenue must go into an account to pay claims against Iraq. Between \$130 million and \$160 million every 90 days must go to the Kurds.

The UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who had convinced Iraq to enter the talks that began in February, said the resolution "is based on one of the most important objectives of the United Nations — to alleviate the problem of poverty and the poorest of the poor who are suffering in Iraq."

Mr. Rifkind blamed President Saddam for causing his people more suffering during the four years the deal had been on offer. "Implementation will bring them some relief," he said. "But they will sadly not enjoy a normal life until Iraq fulfils its obligations. Sanctions will remain until Iraq does so. It is hard to imagine this happening while Saddam remains in power."

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Austria	AS30	Malta	450
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Killer diseases making comeback, says WHO

Chris Mihill

OLD diseases once thought conquered are making a deadly comeback in many parts of the world while new diseases are emerging, which in some cases are untreatable, the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced this week.

Nearly 50,000 men, women and children were dying every day from infectious diseases such as cholera, malaria and tuberculosis, many of which could be prevented or cured for as little as \$1 per person.

At least 30 new infections had emerged in the past 20 years and now threatened the health of millions. For many of those diseases there was no treatment, cure or vaccine. "Without doubt, diseases as yet unknown, but with the potential to be the Aids of tomorrow, lurk in the shadows," the WHO says.

In its 1995 annual report, the organisation says that complacency that infectious diseases had been beaten allowed them to resurface in many countries.

Antibiotics, the most powerful weapon against infection, were becoming increasingly less effective

as organisms became resistant, and not enough effort was being made to find new products.

Hiroshi Nakajima, WHO director general, says in the report: "We are standing on the brink of a global crisis in infectious diseases. No country is safe from them. No country can any longer afford to ignore their threat."

The report says that until recently the struggle for control over infectious diseases had seemed almost over, with smallpox eradicated and six other diseases, including polio, leprosy and guinea-worm disease, targeted for eradication within the next few years.

However, infectious diseases are still the world's leading cause of death, killing at least 17 million people — most of them young children — every year. Up to half of the 5.72 billion people on earth are at risk of many endemic diseases.

"Far from being over, the struggle to control infectious diseases has become increasingly difficult. Diseases that seemed to be subdued, such as tuberculosis and malaria, are fighting back with renewed ferocity. Some, such as cholera and yellow fever, are striking

in regions once thought safe from them.

"Other infections are now so resistant to drugs they are virtually untreatable. In addition, deadly new diseases such as Ebola — for which there is no cure or vaccine — are emerging in many parts of the world."

In 1995, respiratory infections such as pneumonia killed 4.4 million people, about 4 million of them children. Diarrhoeal diseases, including cholera, typhoid and dysentery, spread chiefly by contaminated water or food, killed 3.1 million, most of them children.

Tuberculosis killed almost 3.1 million; malaria killed 2.1 million, including 1 million children; hepatitis B killed more than 1.1 million; HIV and Aids killed more than 1 million; and measles killed more than 1 million children.

Among new diseases identified since 1973 were rotavirus, which causes infant diarrhoea; Legionella, which causes Legionnaire's disease; the Ebola virus; the Hantaan virus, which can cause a fatal haemorrhagic fever; and HTLV 1, which causes leukaemia; HIV; and hepatitis E and C.

Cannes triumph for British director

Derek Malcolm in Cannes

THE British film director Mike Leigh won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Festival on Monday night for his film *Secrets And Lies*.

The tragicomic family drama also won the International Critics' Prize, and Brenda Blethyn completed the triumph as best actress for her part as the white mother of an illegitimate black girl.

Secrets And Lies tells the story of a black adopted op-

tommetrist, Hortense, who sets out to find her real mother. To her surprise, she turns out to be Cynthia, a white unmarried mother played by Blethyn. A family reunion leads to more revelations and emotional chaos, but in the end "everybody is changed for the better".

There was a standing ovation for the recipients of the Best Actor award — the French stars Daniel Auteuil and Pascal Duquenne. Duquenne is the first professional actor with Down's syndrome to receive a big film

festival prize. He stars, as a Down's syndrome man, in *The Eighth Day*, by the Belgian director Jaco Van Dormael, whose brother also suffers from Down's syndrome.

The jury, headed by Francis Ford Coppola, the US director, gave a special prize for daring to the Canadian director David Cronenberg's *Cyberia*, a film many thought pornographic.

The jury was split on the decision, he said, and some wished to be dissociated from the award.

Special on 15/16

Why Dame Shirley will have her day in court

DOES anyone seriously believe that Shirley Porter and the others surcharged for their conduct as Westminster councillors will ever have to pay up (Auditor lands Porter with bill for £31m, May 19)? I can guarantee that the court proceedings will be presided over by a tame Tory judge who will find some get-out for them all.

Any public outcry this might cause will not matter because the other certainty is that the legal process will be prolonged until after the general election. (Rev) Derrick W Cooling, Parleigh, Essex

I DON'T recall any reluctance on the part of Government ministers to condemn the Birmingham Six during their long process of appeal. Perhaps the fact that they were waiting in prison for their appeal to be heard made it a bit more confusing. Lady Porter and her colleagues have been found guilty of serious crimes, but they have the luxury of being able to appeal from the comfort of their own homes. Ian Saville, London

THE issue of housing policy may come to haunt the second Tory flagship of Wandsworth as much as their neighbours in Westminster. Wandsworth council has rejected the limited proposals from John Major on affordable housing and instead has recommitted itself to allowing only supply and demand to determine rents for council and private housing. Rents will now rise to the point where the council and the private

landlords' ability to exploit people's need for a home meets their tenants' ability to pay rent without starving. Any hardship is expected to be met by housing benefit — as ever, a Tory flagship seeks Government subsidy for political experiments. Martin Smith, Secretary, Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Union Council, London

ONE wonders how democracy is to be restored in Westminster council. If majority rule is its defining criterion, patently then, to engineer a majority is to undermine democracy. The Tories in Westminster apparently did not appreciate that the crucial assent in democracy is the assent of the minority. Unwillingness to be a minority marks out the sectarian, who sees elections not as the expression of the "organic" unity of a people but as a power struggle.

As a result of the Tories' "houses for votes" there are areas of Westminster where nobody cares what the greater number of people think. F Griffith, Sale, Cheshire

Israel a law unto itself

HAVING lost faith in the politicians and media, your editorials "Grapes of Wrath have bitter taste" and "War crimes, nothing less" (April 21 and 28) restore some faith in the few who have courage to tell it as it is. While Israel conducted its atrocities and campaign of terror in Lebanon, the arrogance of its lead-

ers was compounded by the complicit shameful silence of politicians. As you rightly state, these are war crimes by any definition. But, alas, these are not the first Israeli war crimes. The list is lengthy, but the total obliteration of hundreds of Palestinian villages, and the repeated massacres of civilians and the murder of Egyptian prisoners of war, in cold blood, in 1956 and 1967, as affirmed by the same generals who committed these crimes, are but two examples.

Israel, however, in the eyes of its leaders and our politicians, is above international law and its dehumanised Arab enemies are beneath contempt. Issmail Zayid, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

IF ISRAEL wanted real peace and security for its settlements in the north of the country, wouldn't it be logical to realise that Hizbullah as a military force only exists as a result of its occupation of south Lebanon? Added to withdrawal from south Lebanon, Israel, in the need to fulfil its security, might recognise the entitlement of another disgruntled mass of people in Lebanon to compensation and return — the 450,000 Palestinians who reside there.

But then again I suppose it is much easier to bomb your enemies without a hint of criticism from the US or indeed Britain. And then claim that an awesome army of Katashuya rockets pose a serious threat to a state that possesses nuclear weapons, and the latest in state-of-the-art military technology. Yago Zayed, Welwyn, Hertfordshire

THE main cause of Hizbullah's militancy is not that Israel maintains its foothold inside southern Lebanon but Islamic fundamentalism — Hizbullah is merely a branch of this, as are Hamas and Islamic Jihad. There is no reason to believe that Hizbullah's rocket attacks on northern Israel would stop if Israel evacuated southern Lebanon. EA Rose, London

IT SEEMS rather odd, especially at this particular moment, that Colman McCarthy should single out Turkey, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia as "habitual violators of human rights" while failing to number their neighbour Israel among the congregation of unsavoury US military clients (Flame of Resistance to Military Build-Up, April 28).

His "oversight" closely resembles the selective blindness of US foreign policy that he appears to be condemning. If he really means to denounce the politics of violence, why is he so selective in his condemnation? Jeff Kowitz, New York, USA

Prejudice of the gene genies

I AM SURPRISED that your list of "scientific racists", such as Christopher Brand, Charles Murray and Roger Pearson (Men who think they're so clever, May 19), who all believe the races differ intellectually because of "measurable genetic factors, omitted such believers in the theory as Winston Spencer Churchill and, more cogently per-

haps, Cecil Rhodes. The letter's Rhodes scholarships were originally meant to attain a goal hauntingly similar to Roger Pearson's Northern League, which, as you say, is to foster "the interests, friendship and solidarity of all Teutonic nations". For many years Rhodes scholars were chosen solely from that group and for that purpose. David Alexander Mitchell, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

A FUNDAMENTAL point appears to have eluded the renewed controversy about race and intelligence. There is no "scientific" definition of race of any kind, whether on the basis of Mendelian genetics or any other system of methodical observation. Furthermore, IQ tests are specified for the measurement of problem-solving capacity, which is not the same as the broad concept understood by intelligence. IQ test results cannot be regarded as an empirical observation, such as the establishment of blood-group or body temperature.

An IQ score includes a reflection of the motivation and enthusiasm of the tested individual — factors which can drastically affect the test result. A hypothesis based on matching the vague notion of race to the tenuous one of intelligence is difficult to take seriously. Kevin Bannon, Dublin, Ireland

OF COURSE it is highly likely that some races are genetically predisposed to higher IQs. But some races seem eminently better 100-metre distance runners than others. With such physical differences between races and genders, why shouldn't there also be mental differences? But who cares? Isn't that what's interesting about people? Pat Turner, London

Land-mine assassin

SOMETIMES think about the man who, after kissing his wife and children goodbye in the morning, goes to his work where he sits at a drawing board and designs land-mines. His design brief is for a mine that is cheap, difficult to detect, and which will severely mutilate or kill anyone unfortunate enough to step on it. Then the man goes home, where his children run to him on two legs, he hugs them with two arms, and tells his wife he had a great day. We might not actually know such a man, but we can be sure that he exists, and that he is one of many who order, devise, construct, sell, buy and lay these vicious weapons.

Perhaps the governments of land-mine producer countries are seriously more concerned about the loss of defence jobs than by the loss of limbs and lives in Bosnia, Cambodia, El Salvador and elsewhere. Those who depend on the manufacture and use of land-mines should seek a more creative way of earning a living. There can be no honourable excuse for world leaders to argue for continued use and development of these weapons. The world's land-mines must be banned, and existing stocks destroyed, without further delay. Martin G Barker, Santa Cruz, Bolivia

Briefly

THE LAST paragraph of Anne Swarbrick's article "Malaise Eats Into Montreal" (April 7) was particularly revealing, with its picture of the Westmount teenager who looks forward to living in Vancouver because "all the signs will be in English, and the telephone operators won't ask you what number you want in French".

There we catch a glimpse of the standard-issue Montreal Anglo, who speaks only English and feels that "those French" should have to speak English for his convenience. If such people are leaving Quebec, one can only say "bon débarras", which I hasten to explain for the enlightenment of your Montreal Anglo readers) means "good riddance". Bruce Inksletter, Rapide-Danseur, Quebec, Canada

I WAS astounded to see a favourable review in the Guardian of a book on the Pinkerton Detective Agency (Gunshoe Who Stuck To It, May 5), America's most notorious anti-union and anti-working class group. The only possible rivals are the police and FBI with whom they often collaborate. Rachel Towne, Albany, New York, USA

NOW that it's been (almost) confirmed that eating BSE infected cows can lead to CJD in humans, the suggestion is that said cows are slaughtered. For several decades it has been recognised that "smoking kills". Has anyone suggested the mass rounding-up and destruction of cigarette stocks? Mindy Noble, Erskineville, NSW, Australia

A GIRL of seven killed while trying to pilot a plane (April 21); a boy of six charged with attempted murder (May 5). I suppose this is not surprising in a country (the US) where children buy their own clothes with an "allowance" at six and are expected to earn money doing odd jobs after school at eight. The lack of parental responsibility in the case of the little girl and the extreme responsibility attributed to the little boy are just two sides of the same coin — the tendency to treat children like adults. Gabriele Tanne, Rome, Italy

FOR Andrew Higgins to suggest the return of Hong Kong to China would lead to corruption is a bit rich (Corruption fears dog Hong Kong, April 28). Corruption has always been rife in Hong Kong, the only difference now is its openness and that it involves higher authorities. (Dr) Adrian Chan, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

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General brings tension to Bangladesh

Arshad Mahmud in Dhaka and Suzanne Goldberg

A WAR was being waged on Monday among Bangladesh's top politicians for control of the military, with the army chief under house arrest, tanks on guard around the presidential palace, and ominous troop movements reported at some provincial barracks.

With less than a month to go before Bangladesh returns to the polls for the second set of general elections this year, the power struggle threatened to worsen the political paralysis that the June 12 ballot is meant to resolve.

Moments after a televised speech in which the president, Abdur Rahman Biswas, sacked the army chief, Lieutenant-General Abu Saleh Moammad Nasim, tanks and jeeps carrying troops were seen moving toward the presidential palace in central Dhaka. It appeared they

were there to protect the president rather than to oust him. Several dozen troops took up positions in front of the state-run radio and television stations.

In his speech, President Biswas said Gen Nasim disregarded his order to retire two officers. Instead, Mr Biswas claimed, the army chief ordered troops loyal to him to march towards Dhaka in "a move tantamount to treason".

Mr Biswas announced the appointment of Major-General Mahbubur Rahman as the new army chief, but it was unclear whether he had succeeded in assuming command in the face of Gen Nasim's refusal to accept what he termed his illegal sacking.

The general denied the president's accusations that he was moving troops to topple him and said that he was committed to upholding the civilian government. On Monday, however, unusual

signs of activity were reported at barracks in the northern towns of Bogra and Mymensingh and in the port of Chittagong.

The showdown came after Mr Biswas — the commander-in-chief and a senior member of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) — tried to retire two very senior officers at the weekend, reportedly without consulting the army chief. The president accused them of "anti-army activities".

In retaliation, Gen Nasim ousted four senior officers whom he suspected of collaborating with the president. President Biswas then ordered the general placed under house arrest.

Behind Gen Nasim's sacking lies the bitter rivalry between the two leading political figures in Bangladesh — the Awami League leader, Sheikh Hasina Wajed, and Begum Zia, the BNP leader who lost power in March.

President Biswas accused Gen Nasim of "involvement with political parties, indiscipline and inciting trouble among the troops". This appears to mean that he suspected the army chief of siding with the opposition firebrand, Sheikh Hasina. Many army officers have taken an active part in politics, and have mainly sided with the Awami League.

Some newspapers have accused the president of running a parallel government in violation of the constitution and with the aim of undermining the caretaker government of Mohammed Habibur Rahman.

By a constitutional amendment hurriedly pushed through by Begum Zia's outgoing government, the defence portfolio was given to the president, a move that provoked condemnation from other parties, who said it was aimed at putting the military under BNP control.

Dominican poll goes to a runoff

Larry Rohter in Santo Domingo

THE FIRST round of balloting in a watershed presidential election in the Dominican Republic has ended with none of the three major parties winning a majority, forcing what promises to be a contentious runoff next month between two left-of-centre candidates.

Nearly complete official results announced last week showed José Francisco Peña Gomez of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, who is making his third attempt to win the presidency of the Caribbean nation, with just under 46 per cent of the vote. Peña Gomez, aged 59, a former mayor of the capital, is one of the best-known leaders of the Latin American wing of the Socialist International.

In the second round, scheduled for June 30, Dr Peña Gomez will face Leonel Fernández of the Dominican Liberation Party, who won 39 per cent of the vote. Dr Fernández is the political protégé and heir of the leftist firebrand Juan Bosch, but has worked to move the party toward a more centrist position.

Dr Peña Gomez said he considered himself "virtually the president of the republic" on the basis of his strong showing. "We have won a resounding victory," he proclaimed, arguing that he could lose only if "acts of magic" were directed against him.

In private, however, some of his advisers were more circumspect. The cause of their concern lies in the same polls, conducted by the Gallup Organisation for the news magazine Rumbo, that correctly predicted Peña Gomez's margin of victory in last week's vote. Those soundings show that if a second round were to be held immediately, Fernández would be the victor, winning 52 per cent of the vote.

Even before the vote, there were numerous signs of a tacit alliance between Fernández and Joaquín Balaguer, the country's 89-year-old president, who is in his seventh term of office and is prohibited from succeeding himself. Through-out the campaign, Mr Balaguer systematically undermined the campaign of his own Social Christian Reform Party, which finished a weak third, with 15 per cent of the vote.

Dr Balaguer despises Dr Peña Gomez, whose enemies suggest his patriotism is in doubt because of his Haitian ancestry, and is expected to do all that he can to prevent his victory. In his final campaign speech on Sunday, President Balaguer, in a clear slap at the front-runner, urged voters to support the candidate who was "most authentically Dominican". — The New York Times

Nine hostages freed in Irian Jaya jungle

John Agillonby in Jakarta and Alex Bellos

NINE hostages, including four Britons, were freed last week in an airborne rescue operation by Indonesian special forces after being held for four months in the remote jungle province of Irian Jaya.

But the joy of freedom turned to horror when they learnt that two Indonesian hostages had been murdered by their kidnappers. Anna Melvor, aged 20, was the only witness to the killings as she had become separated from the other British hostages — Daniel Start, William Oates and Annette van der Kolk. She was found alone about an hour after the others had been freed.

Twenty-five Indonesian special forces, or Kopassus, troops rescued the hostages after tracking them and their captors of the Free Papua Movement (OPM) for five days through some of the densest jungle on earth.

Their location had been pinpointed by an unpowered drone, or reconnaissance aircraft. The troops descended from helicopters on the jungle clearing where the group was being held. All those rescued are unhurt and in reasonable health. The freed group comprises four Britons, two Dutch nationals and three Indonesians. The Britons, all Cambridge university graduates, were kidnapped in January.



Turkey's president Suleyman Demirel, surrounded by his bodyguards, gets into his limousine after surviving an assassination attempt last week in the western town of Izmit

Yeltsin plays liberal card to get votes

David Hearst in Moscow

BORIS Yeltsin, Russia's president, said at the weekend he would consider reshuffling his cabinet and forming an alliance with anti-communists in an attempt to woo voters in the June 16 presidential election.

During a visit to the Siberian city of Omsk, Mr Yeltsin also promised to prevent poll fraud and said he would go ahead with a pre-election trip to Chechnya, despite what he claimed was intelligence that separatist rebels planned to kill him. Mr Yeltsin said: "We may perhaps replace the greater part of the government team."

He said members of other political parties may be invited to join the government. His comments appeared to address some of the demands made by Grigory Yavlinsky, a liberal economist, who has suggested an alliance with Mr Yeltsin to fight the communist party led by Gennady Zyuganov.

Mr Yavlinsky is demanding not only the dismissal of the prime minister, Viktor Chornomyrdin, and an immediate end to the war in Chechnya, but the dismissal of starting it. Last week Mr Yeltsin dramatically demonstrated the power of his office when he issued executive decrees phasing out the death penalty

and military conscription. Battling to fend off the strong Communist challenge and maintain Russia's shaky engagement with the West, Mr Yeltsin announced that the Russian army would be composed solely of professional soldiers by 2000. The unexpected move is likely to be bitterly resisted by generals disillusioned with talk of army reform and starved of funds.

With his opinion poll rating stuck at 24 to 28 per cent, and many around him urging him to cancel the elections altogether, Mr Yeltsin appears to have been forced into high risk measures.

Washington Post, page 16

Karadzic foxes Bildt over promise to resign

Julian Borger in Zagreb

INTERNATIONAL mediators in Bosnia claimed on Monday to have won a promise from Serb separatists that Radovan Karadzic, the indicted war criminal, would step down from power. But the Serbs almost immediately denied making a deal, saying only that their leader had delegated some duties as self-styled president to his deputy.

The denial from the Serb stronghold in Pale was a blow for the international community's representative in Bosnia, Carl Bildt. He believed he had manoeuvred the Serb leader into a corner, but may himself have been outwitted by headline separatists, who appear to have strengthened their hand after the weekend talks.

Mr Bildt said he was making progress. "No one is going to achieve heaven on earth and all of the commandments of the Bible or of the peace agreement here within seconds," he told reporters in Sarajevo. Colum Murphy, Mr Bildt's spokesman, said Mr Bildt was assured by the Serb parliamentary speaker, Momcilo Krajanik, that Mr Karadzic would "disappear from sight." We have an understanding that Karadzic would not be seen or heard from.

The apparent agreement for Mr Karadzic to step down came after talks in Belgrade at the weekend between Mr Bildt and Serbia's president, Slobodan Milosevic. But when an official from Mr Bildt's office returned to Pale to translate the understanding into a legal document, he left empty-handed.

The confusion about Mr Karadzic's future role was compounded by an earlier announcement that he would hand over responsibility for relations with the international community to his

"vice-president", Biljana Plavsic, another hardliner.

Mr Karadzic and his military commander, General Ratko Mladic, have been widely viewed as the greatest obstacles to the success of the Dayton peace settlement. Both have been indicted for war crimes after their bloody attempt to carve an ethnically pure Serb statelet out of Bosnia, and have blocked attempts to implement the treaty's clauses on the country's reintegration.

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Dole quits Senate and goes for broke



The US this week

Martin Walker

ROBERT DOLE announced that for the sake of his presidential campaign, he would give up one of the great congressional careers of modern times. First elected to the House of Representatives in 1960, he was elected to the Senate in 1988 and has stayed there ever since. He has been minority leader and majority leader, chairman of his party, vice-presidential candidate to Gerald Ford in 1976, and a presidential candidate in 1980 and 1988. He finally secured his party's nomination this year, and on the eve of his 73rd birthday decided to go for broke.

"The White House or home," Dole vowed in an emotional speech that stopped in its tracks the Republican waiting at President Bill Clinton's massive 31-point lead in the opinion polls. Politicians are hereditary creatures, and within moments the Republicans were chrousing that Dole had pulled off a master stroke, and cut himself loose from an unpopular Congress.

There is some truth in this. In less than 18 months, the historic Republican victory to win control of both House and Senate has turned terribly sour. The architect of that victory, the garrulous and ebullient Speaker, Newt Gingrich, has become the most unpopular politician in the United States.

By the time Dole had wrapped up his party's nomination this spring and returned to lead the Senate, the Republican-run Congress was no longer a popular place to be. The Democrats were learning with relish the old arts of opposition, deploying the rule book that Dole had written on the ways a well-drilled minority can stall and delay and frustrate the majority.

Instead of the Senate being the launch pad for the Dole campaign, it became a cross between a prison and a pillory. Dole was trapped in the Senate floor, trying to push through laws that the Democrats could easily block, while the Democrats sat back and tested popular ideas on focus groups. Once they found one, like the plan to raise the minimum wage, they pushed it at Dole and forced him to block it.

In the image battle, which is the one that matters, Clinton won and the Republicans lost. They were blamed for the closing down of government during the budget wars, and they were blamed for being mean to the old folk and careless of the environment. The Republicans moved so far to the right that they created a vast space in the centre for Clinton to stake out and colonise.

Clinton grabbed more central ground again last week, enacting a law that would require sex offenders to be registered, so that when they emerge from prison, their new neighbours can be alerted. Then his White House spokesman said that the President opposed same-sex marriages, just when the Republicans were launching a "Defence of Marriage" bill. The state of Hawaii is close to legalising homosexual marriages. Under current law, all other states must recognise a marriage that is valid in any one state. The Republicans want to give the other 49 states the right to ignore the Hawaii rule.

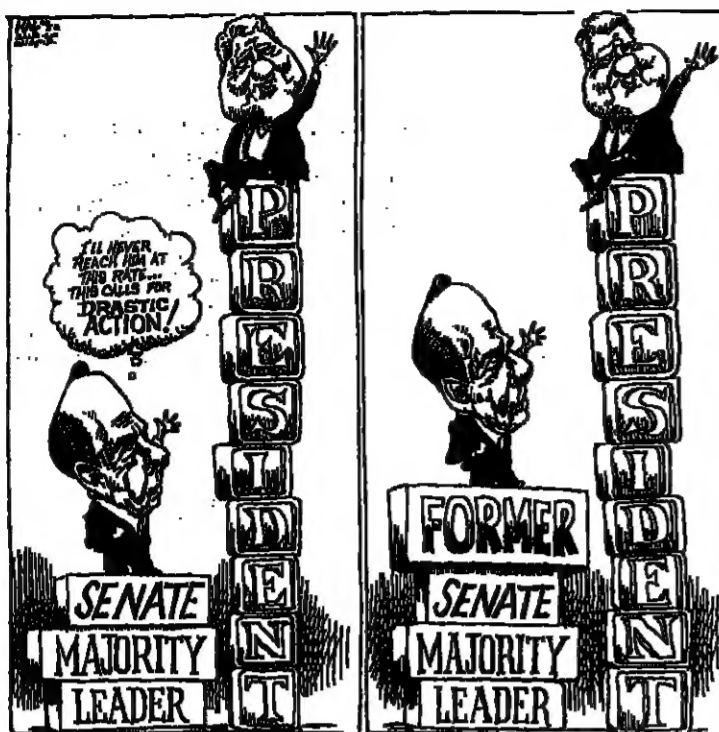
Clinton's most audacious move to the centre came at his round-table conference on corporate responsibility. He gathered more than 100 chief executives but carefully avoided challenging them on redundancies and downsizing in a period of soaring corporate profits and ballooning executive pay. The President was so cautious that he began by saying some companies needed to cut staff, and concluded that he had no right to demand that bosses show some wage restraint.

"Some of these big companies have got to downsize," Clinton acknowledged, and boasted of his own success at slashing the federal government payroll by 11 per cent. "I am in no position, and Congress is certainly in no position, to make judgements on what any particular executive should be paid. That's crazy," he said.

Instead, Clinton used the bully pulpit of the presidency to cajole business into employee-friendly corporate practices. He announced a new annual prize, the corporate citizenship award, to be named after the late commerce secretary, Ron Brown, who died last month in an air crash in Croatia.

"Thirty years ago, the average CEO made about 35 to 40 times what the average worker did. Today that's up to 200 times," Clinton said. "There is a general feeling in America among a lot of people that they have worked hard, played by the rules, but have not benefited from the country's general growth."

Clinton deliberately avoided any class war rhetoric, and shrank from the opportunity to make downsizing into a modern morality tale for a populist politician in an election year. That originally had been the plan. And why not? In the first three years of Clinton's presidency, AT&T and IBM each laid off 120,000 people, General Motors axed 100,000, Boeing shed 60,000, and Sears lost



50,000 as the US's giant corporations hauled themselves out of recession and back into profit.

Clinton had ridden the 1991 recession all the way to the White House with his 1992 campaign slogan: "It's the economy, Stupid." This year, Pat Buchanan threatened to do the same, with his attack on corporate greed and his exploitation of downsizing as the new fear of the US workforce.

The drumbeat of alarm intensified with a week-long series by the New York Times in March, with headlines like "Millions of Casualties... The Company as Family, No More... Big Holes Where Dignity Used To Be". It claimed that "three-quarters of all households have had a close encounter with layoffs since 1980... workers with at least some college education make up the majority of people whose jobs were eliminated... Roughly 50 per cent more people, about 3 million, are affected by layoffs each year than the 2 million victims of violent crime."

The labour secretary, Robert Reich, who has been campaigning for tax breaks to reward companies that show loyalty to their staff, planned the conference as the way for Clinton to catch this radical mood. Reich has campaigned tirelessly on the gaping chasm between the high-employment prosperity hailed in the official statistics, and the general verdict of economic gloom and grumpiness expressed in opinion polls. Moreover, after offending trade unions with his relentless support of free trade, an assault on corporate greed would have helped relations with the Democratic party's core constituency.

"I go around the country and I hear people say the company isn't loyal to me, so why should I be loyal to the company?" Reich said as his conference opened. Under his arm was a copy of that day's Wall Street Journal, which published a poll in which 75 per cent of voters said that US family incomes were falling behind the cost of living, and 51 per cent said their own family income was noticeably falling behind. Another 62 per cent thought that companies should do more to share profits with their workers, which was one of the "good corporate habits" that Clinton thought he might encourage.

Even Clinton's conciliatory approach was not enough for some business leaders, who insist that their responsibility is to the shareholders, and that the way to take care of the workforce is to keep the company profitable enough to pay the wages. "Every one of those CEOs at Clinton's conference should be taken out and spanked for not standing up and defending free enterprise," said Al Dunlap of Scott Paper. He is known to his former employees as "Chainsaw Al" and "Rambo in Pin Stripes" for slashing the workforce by a third.

Clinton's opportunity to sound like a Democratic president, to rally the left-wing of his party and to denounce corporate greed, simply fizzled out. The reason was purely political. Clinton is campaigning for reelection on the claim of a strong economy, with nearly 9 million new jobs, low inflation, and unemployment down to a 20 year low at 5.4 per cent.

Gloom about downsizing does not fit into that narrative. There is a further embarrassment. The biggest downsizer in the US is Clinton himself, who has cut the federal

workforce by more than 200,000 jobs — 11.7 per cent. He is proud of the way he has reduced government bureaucracy to its smallest size since Kennedy was president, 33 years ago.

To run the political point home, Clinton's own economic adviser has formally reported that downsizing was a myth all along. Dr Joseph Stiglitz, who came from Stanford to be chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors at the White House, published his survey of the US labour market from 1993-98 late last month. His basic conclusion is that the US job market is booming, creating more than 2 million new jobs a year.

"The news is encouraging: employment has grown disproportionately in the industry-occupation job categories paying above median wages. Even in the traditionally lower paying service industry, a majority of the net employment growth has been in management and professional specialty positions, which typically pay above median wages," the survey said. "Contrary to conventional wisdom, the new jobs are not disproportionately part-time, low skill positions," the report went on. "Employment in 'hamburger-flipping' jobs actually fell between 1994-5."

Clinton was particularly upset last year by a cartoon that showed a politician looking like him boasting at a political dinner of the 8 million new jobs created in his term. Behind him, the overworked waiter grunts: "Yeah, and I've got three of them."

"The percentage of employed persons working multiple jobs has remained in the neighbourhood of 6 per cent since the late 1980s," retorted Stiglitz. Not that his report was all sunny news. Jobs losses in the recession of 1991 were unusually high among older workers, white collar employees, and those with some college education. Nor, said the small print, did they easily find new jobs.

"Roughly a quarter of those displaced during 1991 and 1992 had either stopped searching for work or had not found work by the time they were surveyed in 1994... Six or more years after displacement, a displaced worker's earnings remain roughly 10 per cent below what they could have otherwise expected to earn."

"A dynamic labour inevitably destroys some jobs while creating others, and the costs of job losses are both significant and persistent," Stiglitz concluded, the balanced verdict of an eminent but very orthodox economist. Indeed, his textbook is often cited by Republicans when they want to attack the Democrats' plan to raise the minimum wage. "The President's own adviser says this will increase unemployment," they cry.

Deep down, one suspects the President agrees with the Republicans. He is proud of cutting the federal government, proud of cutting the federal budget deficit in half, proud of being able to say that he has carried out his pledge to "end welfare as we know it". He is proud of enacting his free-trade strategy, even if this does intensify the impact of low-wage competition on US workers. All in all, Clinton has governed like an orthodox and traditional liberal Republican, which explains why Dole was reduced to his act of desperation. With Clinton abandoning the left and spreading himself all across the centre-right in social policy and the centre-right in social policy, he has left very little room for Dole to campaign in.

Iran's feminists challenge the mullahs

Kathy Evans

A NEW generation of Iranian feminists led by the daughter of the president is demanding the right to run for the highest posts in government, including the presidency.

Only a few months ago the idea of a woman candidate for the presidency would have raised a few laughs and little else. For the past 17 years since the Islamic revolution, Iranian women have been forced by law to abide by certain dress codes, barred from certain jobs, and kept on the sidelines in decision-making.

Now, to the horror of the conservative clerics, women are demand-

ing change in the wake of the unprecedented success of women candidates in recent elections. The most spectacular success was scored by Faiza Hashemi Rafsanjani, the president's daughter, who won the second highest number of votes. She was second only to Nateq Nouri, leader of the Combatant Clergymen's Association, who has already announced he plans to seek the presidency.

Ms Hashemi signalled the launch of her campaign for high office recently with a declaration in the country's leading feminist magazine that there was no religious objection in Islam to a woman becoming president.

"Women should now be getting to the higher levels, including the executive level, the presidency," she told Zanan (Women) magazine, the Iranian feminist journal.

She did not deny recent press speculation that her success in the general elections could pave the way for a presidential bid. Much will depend on her father, President Hashemi Rafsanjani, she said. He is barred by the constitution from standing for a third term as president next year and his political future seems uncertain.

Many Iranian analysts believe that Ms Hashemi, aged 33, is well-placed for an attempt to secure the parliamentary speakership, or at the very

least, deputy speakership. Success in this would boost the status of women deputies enormously and signal a new tone of liberalism and modernism — just the kind of development conservative clerics oppose.

Since the election, Iranian feminists have been particularly outspoken. A leading woman lawyer, Mehrangiz Kar, recently criticised the Guardians' Council, one of the highest clerical and parliamentary bodies in Iran, for not including women.

Ms Hashemi's emergence coincides with an unprecedented debate in clerical circles about the status of women and whether the Islamic government has proved oppressive and

unnecessarily harsh to them. A number of pro-feminist clergy members have written long articles in women's magazines challenging the Islamic Republic's attitude to women.

To Western eyes, Ms Hashemi might appear an unlikely feminist. She always wears the black *chador*, the symbol of conservative Muslim womanhood, and forswears cosmetics. The only public hint of her liberal views so far came in her election campaign, when she was the only woman candidate to show her chin in her election posters.

She was attacked recently by the radical clerical-backed group, Ansar Hizbullah, for urging that women be allowed to ride bicycles and motorcycles. Radicals compared her with the Prophet Mohammed's wife, Ayesha, a figure viewed as anti-Shi'ite by Iranian Muslims.

Report calls for end to Iraq embargo

Maggie O'Kane

A REPORT published last week by medical experts and academics from the United States and Britain has condemned six years of international sanctions against Iraq.

Their continuation, as a war against the Iraqi people, is tantamount to shooting down a plane full of innocent people because there are hijackers aboard", says the main author, Roger Normand, policy director of the New York Centre for Economic and Social Justice.

The findings of researchers from Harvard University and the London School of Economics support World Health Organisation claims that more than 500,000 children may have died in Iraq in the last six years because of sanctions.

Teams measured mortality and health in identified clusters. The main causes of death in children were found to be infections and illnesses flourishing due to malnutrition and weakness. Basic medicines were not available to the vast majority because of cost — hyper-inflation makes a doctor's monthly pay worth around \$4.50.

The centre has launched a legal challenge to the UN, claiming that the sanctions breach recognised international human rights principles.

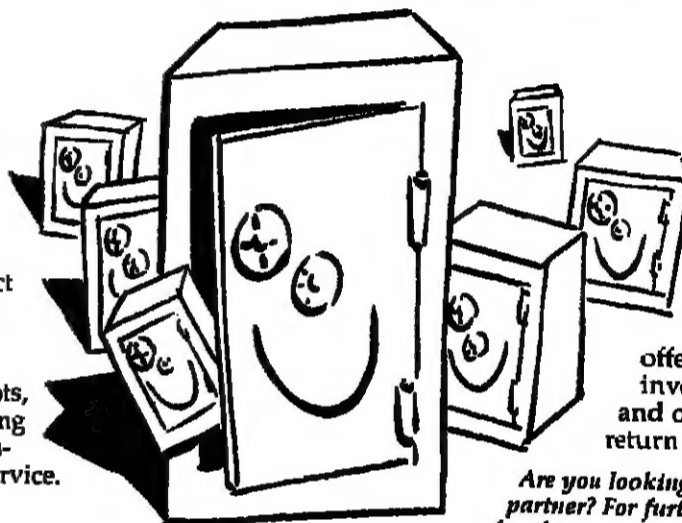
Britain and the US have been the strongest supporters of sanctions, arguing that they must remain in force as a means of control until President Saddam Hussein cooperates fully with international inspection teams and reveals all information on his chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons capacity.

Fearing that President Saddam will manipulate for his own benefit a deal which allows Iraq to sell oil to pay for food and medicine, Britain and the US have insisted on tough terms. The UN has agreed on conditions, but the deal has yet to be accepted by Baghdad.

In the Iraqi capital there is little evidence of hardship among the ruling elite. Palaces are being built and — according to a report on human rights — President Saddam's eldest son, Uday, controls a black market in hard currency which ensures funds for the military and elite.

Abdul-Hag, editor of the Arab Review in London, said: "He [Saddam] is stronger than he ever was. People are weakened by the sanctions and afraid to do anything. Instead they are blaming the West, not Saddam."

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FBI traps bank robber through the Internet

Mark Tran in New York

THE FBI at the weekend unveiled its first success in tracking down criminals through the Internet — the capture of a fugitive on its Ten Most Wanted list, a bank robber hiding in Guatemala.

The breakthrough came after someone living in Guatemala, who had seen a photo of Leslie Iabon Rogge on the FBI's home page on the World Wide Web, tipped off the Feds that Mr Rogge was living in the country.

Armed with this information, the Guatemalan police launched an extensive manhunt with the help of security personnel from the US embassy and Americans living in Guatemala.

Mr Rogge, "feeling the intense pressure", turned himself in to the US embassy. He returned to the US in handcuffs on Sunday and was set to appear in a Miami court this week.

The FBI started its home page — address <http://www.fbi.gov> — a little over a year ago. It consists of information about the

bureau, speeches, a freephone number, and the FBI's Ten Most Wanted fugitive list, with pictures of the criminals and descriptions of the crimes they are accused of committing.

Mr Rogge, aged 58, appeared on the list in 1990. A convicted bank robber, he escaped from federal custody in Idaho in 1985. Since his escape he has been charged with the robbery of the Exchange Bank of Eldorado in Arkansas, and is wanted in connection with two other bank robberies.

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Nolan urges staff to blow the whistle

James Melkie and David Henoke

THOUSANDS of public bodies, from universities and schools to housing associations, were told last week to set up whistleblowers' charters to help ensure proper use of nearly £16 billion of taxpayers' money.

The Nolan committee on standards in public life called for an end to a culture in which managers "shot the messenger" when staff alleged fraud or impropriety. Employees must not be disciplined or victimised, provided that they acted without malice and in the public interest.

Lord Nolan, in a letter to John Major, said there was no "fundamental malaise", but his report called for more openness in the running of 4,600 bodies, including grant-maintained schools, further education colleges and training bodies.

The Prime Minister promised to give the report "the close study it deserves", while Labour's Derek Foster, shadow chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, said the party would ensure that local authorities had the power to scrutinise "policies and actions of such quangos". He said: "Without such teeth, local accountability will remain a pipe-dream."

The bodies studied by Nolan are governed by unpaid boards but mostly funded and supervised by national quangos.

The committee said these were responsible for identifying and remedying malpractice "yet in the few cases where things have gone badly wrong... it has frequently been the tip-off to the press or the local Member of Parliament... which has prompted the regulator into action".

There should be more careful use of gagging clauses, and there should be opportunities for staff to raise concerns confidentially inside, and outside, organisations. An approach that invited all staff "to act responsibly to uphold the reputation of their organisation and maintain

public confidence... might help to avoid cases when the first reaction of management faced with unwelcome information has been to shoot the messenger".

Meanwhile, in a move which forestalls the Nolan Committee, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the National Audit Office are investigating possible multi-million pound fraud and corruption scandals involving hundreds of homes bought by housing associations for homeless people in the West Midlands.

The investigation raises questions about the monitoring role of the Housing Corporation after allegations that it failed properly to deal with one potential fraud after lending millions of pounds to one of the associations involved.

The scandal centres on the West Midlands' biggest housing association, Focus, after a number of whistleblowers and its chief executive, Richard Clark, passed files to the police alleging that a fraud ring involving members of his staff, valuers, solicitors and vendors, is operating in Birmingham.

More than 500 property transactions involving seven housing associations are under investigation. The SFO is understood to be concerned that the ring could be operating on an even wider scale.

A confidential report details 116 property deals where it is alleged that nearly 30 per cent of the sale price has been creamed off to the cartel. Three members of Focus have been dismissed. Other allegations of mortgage fraud, corruption, and lavish lifestyles financed by public money in a defunct Birmingham housing association, Shape, are also being investigated by the police and auditors.

Robin Corbett, Labour MP for Birmingham Erdington, who passed some of the information to the audit office, said: "The disclosures emphasise the need for much tougher guidance and control over the spending of public money."

Gangs in benefit swindle

James Melkie

ORGANISED criminals are swindling the state of millions of pounds a year in bogus housing benefit claims, prompting MPs to demand more high profile prosecutions and exemplary sentences for fraudsters.

Frank Field, chairman of the Commons social security committee, said that an investigation of private landlords responsible for more than 20 homes on which benefit was claimed would reveal "more multi-millionaires created through housing benefit than through the National Lottery".

Laws on data protection and confidentiality should be reviewed to help stop the fraud, the committee said in a report last week. Up to a fifth of the £10 billion housing benefit bill may be siphoned off illegally.

The all-party committee believes that "third parties" — private landlords or their agents — are responsible for most malpractice.

The committee pressed for more powers to check on landlords' and claimants' tax and national insurance details.

Payments almost doubled in five years, and increasing subsidies to tenants in the private sector meant much was going directly to landlords.

Many serious frauds, including false addresses, fictitious tenancies, multiple identities, false income declarations and forgery of cheques, could only be maintained for long periods with the active support of landlords and their agents.

The report said: "These most serious cases have nothing to do with poverty or desperation. They are organised crimes motivated by greed and deceit."

Thousands of sick or unemployed home owners face crippling mortgage demands following a bungle by the Department of Social Security.

DSS officials said overpayment of mortgage interest remained the biggest problem in the running of the income support system for home owners.

Thousands of income support claimants have faced demands for repayment of benefits and then repossession when they could not meet the debt.



The Week in Britain James Lewis

Chirac gets choice cut of pomp

BRTAIN pulled out all the stops for President Jacques Chirac's four-day state visit. The Anglophile republican President — the first head of state to arrive in London by rail, travelling on a scheduled Eurostar train — clearly enjoyed the pomp and pageantry. He blew kisses of delight to the crowds from the Queen's open carriage, and even allowed himself to be stuffed with British beef at Buckingham Palace without a word of protest.

The President and the Prime Minister, John Major, put on an impressive display of affection. Not in 50 years had relations between the two countries been so good, enthused Mr Major, while President Chirac urged solidarity and the creation of a mysterious "global partnership" between France and Britain. The great love-in could not, however, disguise the crisis across Europe, and particularly in the Tory party, over beef.

Mr Chirac offered a few helpful words. He endorsed Mr Major's "step-by-step" approach towards persuading the European Union to lift the ban imposed on the export of British beef because of the scare over "mad cow disease". But many Tory Eurosceptic backbenchers are in no mood for negotiation and want to confront the EU and begin retaliatory measures.

They have demanded a variety of retaliatory measures including stopping Britain's contributions to the EU budget; slashing EU beef exports to Britain; threatening sanctions; or pursuing an "empty chair" policy at EU negotiations. So far, however, the Cabinet has favoured patience and negotiation, and Mr Chirac reminded his listeners that the scare had hit the German and French beef markets as hard, if not harder, than Britain's.

Meanwhile, the Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, offered to double — from 40,000 to 80,000 — the number of cattle over 30-months-old which Britain is prepared to call to restore public confidence in beef.

There were cautious hopes that the EU veterinary experts would endorse a proposal by the European Commission to lift the ban on British gelatine, tallow and beef semen. But on Monday the EU's

veterinary committee voted down proposals to ease the ban on exports of beef byproducts until more detailed eradication measures are agreed, plunging Britain into further confrontation with the EU.

PETER MANDELSON, Labour's clever election strategist and close confidant of the party leader, Tony Blair, last week generously praised the qualities of Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor. Mr Brown was equally generous in his praise of Mr Mandelson, saying: "I get on with him. He is one of the most brilliant electoral strategists and has done a tremendous amount for the party."

It was all part of an exercise by Mr Blair to put an end to gossip about petty feuds between members of his shadow cabinet. He told them sternly that, with the approach of a general election, the collective leadership needed to demonstrate self-restraint, and that "what was once seen as no more than harmless gossip now has the potential to damage the Labour party".

Mr Brown is said not to have entirely forgiven Mr Mandelson for backing Mr Blair for the leadership in 1994. The deputy leader, John Prescott, did his own bit of stirring when he criticised Mr Brown's plan to give the Treasury more power in a Labour government.

There is nothing new about tension among big egos at the top in politics. Mr Prescott and Robin Cook, the shadow foreign secretary, may be distancing themselves slightly from the leader in case he should push his modernising zeal too far, but the ideological differences here are minimal compared with the distances that separated prominent members of previous Labour governments.

ATACKS on the Government's running of the National Health Service were renewed by the doctors' trade union, the British Medical Association, which claimed that hospitals across the country were facing "financial meltdown" and that patient care was being put at risk because they were being pressed to treat more patients for less money.

Hospitals are required to cut their budgets by 3 per cent each year. They are not allowed to make a surplus, and the fees they charge to family doctors and health authorities must be sufficient only to cover costs, not to replace equipment or expand services. According to the RMA, the most efficient hospitals, treating the greatest number of patients, become financial losers and are driven towards bankruptcy because they are forced to charge unrealistically low prices.

In some hospitals, surgeons claim to have been ordered by managers to create waiting lists artificially by working slowly as a way of making money. Other hospitals complain that the only way they can balance their books is by discharging patients early.

The Audit Commission joined in the attack, asserting that the GP fund-holding system — claimed by ministers to be the "driving force" behind NHS reforms — was failing to produce improvements for most patients because some doctors had neither the skill nor the motivation to make the scheme work.

GP fund-holders are given budgets to "buy" hospital care and specialist services from wherever they can get the best deals. The commission accepts the principle of fund-holding, but questions doctors' skills and competence in implementing it.

LORD RUNCIE, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, admitted that he had knowingly ordained homosexual priests in direct contravention of the Church's ban, a policy which he described as "judicial".

There had been times in his episcopate, said Lord Runcie, "when I acted in a 'don't-want-to-know-and-why-should-I-inquire' way". He added that he never liked the prospect of inquiring into what happened in a man's bedroom unless he volunteered information.

The Church's "compromising" policy is to accept gays for the clergy, but not for the clergy, Lord Runcie's admission provoked a storm of protest and could open a rift even more divisive than that over the ordination of women, which has led to 400 clerics leaving the Church.

Labour to end free degrees

Patrick Wintour

LABOUR is to bite the bullet after three years of party wrangling and commit itself to making graduates pay back part of the cost of their university education. The move signals the end of "free" higher education.

Party leaders are planning to tackle the crisis in higher education funding by agreeing that students in future must pay back a proportion of their maintenance contributions through the national insurance system. The idea was ditched at the last moment in 1993 when John Smith, the then leader, was not prepared to make an issue of it.

The proposals form part of a document on life-long learning prepared by the shadow education secretary, David Blunkett. They form part of Labour's evidence to the Government-established but bipartisan Dearing Commission on higher education funding.

They come at the end of a troubled fortnight for Labour dominated by disputes over policy and personalities.

Separate proposals to limit child benefit for children over 16 and switch funds to training and college education for 16- to 19-year-olds have already provoked unrest within the party.

Mr Blunkett has so far shown a

sure footing on education policy, and senior leftwing members of the policy forum appeared at the weekend to accept the logic of the proposals, arguing they will help rather than hinder children from poor families reach higher education.

Labour is pleased that it has stayed one step ahead of the Tories on this issue and is pointing out that tuition fees will not be subject to repayment.

The move is likely to receive broad support within the party as the only way to continue to fund the increasing number of students. The number of students has risen from 98,600 in 1985 to 227,000 last year. The National Union of Students

and university heads have already reluctantly embraced the idea of paying back some tuition costs through national insurance or the tax system to help fund a boom in student numbers.

Labour's proposals are modelled on an Australian government higher education contribution scheme, which has succeeded in not deterring children from poorer families. The party is to propose that repayment of maintenance grants should be related to earnings, with the grants paid back through the national insurance system. Unemployed graduates will not be required to make repayments.

The paper argues that the Government's National Student Loans Company has effectively collapsed with take-up at less than half the number of students eligible. Many

students are unable to meet the five year repayment requirement schedules and defaults are increasing.

Labour points out that the number of students will have to continue to rise if Britain is to compete with other countries.

Vice-Chancellors have been threatening to impose £300 per head student levy in 1997 to confront the financial crisis, a threat that forced the Government to set up the Dearing inquiry.

Labour's national policy forum at the weekend also saw delegates denouncing the party leadership over its handling of plans to withdraw child benefit from parents of children aged over 16 still at school. Chris Smith, the Social Security Spokesman, reassured delegates that a review of Child Benefit was under way, but with no decisions made.

Tax plan to cut car use

Keith Harper

LABOUR is preparing a wide-ranging plan using the tax system to persuade people to use public transport and leave their cars at home.

It has targeted a review of company car taxation and vehicle excise duty to encourage "less intensive" car use. If it wins the election, Labour may also let local authorities keep toll and parking charges — if they are spent on transport schemes.

In the rail industry, one of the plan's most controversial proposals is for staff to sit on a newly constituted British Railways board "to make the new BR a model of the stakeholder company of the future" — aiming at a new relationship between management and staff, who will be "justly rewarded" so they work with a full commitment to the industry's success.

The proposals were in a document, *Consensus for Change*, drafted by Labour's policy forum at the weekend. It contains ideas for a 20-year strategy in transport.

It comes a month after Labour's plans for a reform of company car use was revealed. But the current draft is more

general and carefully prepared not to conflict with shadow chancellor Gordon Brown's spending commitments.

In its foreword, Clare Short, shadow transport secretary, says: "The car cannot be wished away and proposals that seek to punish car use will not win public support. But [people] must be persuaded to use them differently."

The document recognises that for many jobs a company car is essential. But it wants to study the structure of company car taxation "to encourage more energy efficient and environmentally sustainable car use". It also criticises the flat-rate system of vehicle excise duty, saying it takes no account of mileage or energy efficiency.

Ms Short is opposed to motorway tolls, but backs local authority direct charges for road use or their entering public-private partnerships to raise investment for transport.

Other proposals include a local authority ban on lorries through small towns and villages, amid more efficient use of road freight.

Comment, page 12

Firms stop cash for Tories

Lisa Buckingham

FINANCIAL support for the Conservative party among Britain's biggest companies has collapsed, leaving the Government with only a handful of backers in the run-up to the election.

Research by the Guardian shows that just 12 of the top 100 companies which have so far published annual reports for 1995 are continuing to give money to the Tories.

Of the groups which have still to provide details, the Government can rely only on Dixons, Marks & Spencer and Tomkins to remain loyal. The defections mean the Government will probably collect just £20,000 from Britain's biggest companies — roughly half the support it gained in the run-up to the last election, when 29 corporations made donations.

The Tories have clearly been snubbed by a number of big corporations alienated by government policies. The brewer and retailer, Whitbread, for example, cancelled its long-standing support following a perceived failure to help the

beer industry in successive budgets.

Next year the pressure could intensify. The drugs giant Glaxo Wellcome gave £2,000 last year but has said it will no longer contribute. The insurance group Legal & General, which gives about £30,000 a year, decided not to seek shareholder approval for future contributions.

Shareholders are helping to turn the screw by questioning the validity of donations to any political party. This has prompted a number of companies to split their political contributions more evenly.

The acquisition of the Forte empire, which gave £80,000 in its last financial year, by the politically neutral Granada group will also affect Tory finances. And the four-way split of the Hanson empire, coupled with the retirement of founder chairman Lord Hanson, could end its long-running £100,000-a-year donation.

It was also confirmed that accountants Touche Ross told the Conservative party in July 1993 that £365,000 it had been given by fugitive tycoon Aal Nadir had been stolen from his company.

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New doubt cast on IRA bomb trials

Alan Travis and John Mullin

CONFIDENCE in the British criminal justice system was dealt a devastating blow last week when the Home Office announced that the discovery of contaminated forensic equipment could lead to the convictions of at least a dozen IRA bombers being overturned.

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, ordered an independent inquiry into the disclosure that could affect some of the most high profile cases of the last six years.

The Home Office said scientists at the Ministry of Defence's Port Halstead Forensic Explosives Laboratory, in Kent, had discovered by accident on March 14 that the centrifuge machine used to gather explosives evidence in bomb cases had been contaminated with Semtex for more than six years.

The discovery was first reported to Mr Howard two months ago. He admitted that evidence from the laboratory was used to secure convictions in at least a dozen terrorist explosives cases.

But Home Office sources confirmed that the inquiry may find more cases are involved if it proves that the contamination spread to other parts of the laboratory.

A total of 38 people charged under the Prevention of Terrorism Act have been convicted of offences involving explosives since the contaminated centrifuge was brought into service in 1989. It is believed that the dozen cases identified by Mr Howard are among them.

Cases called into question are believed to include the Crickelewood bomb blast, the Warrington gas explosion and the attack on the Israeli embassy in London. Many of the cases will go to the Criminal Cases Review Authority before being referred to the Court of Appeal. For any sentence to be set aside it will have to be shown that the flawed forensic evidence was a crucial factor in the conviction.

The centrifuge machine at the centre of the scandal had been in use until 1989 at a nearby laboratory. Scientists have not been able to pinpoint the origin of the contamination but believe the centrifuge —

the size of a microwave oven — was already contaminated when they started using it.

"By normal standards the explosive detected was tiny," said Mr Howard in a Commons written answer. Later, he added: "The chances that there has been a miscarriage of justice are very small. But I don't want to take any risks or leave any stone unturned."

Garth Peirce, who represented Daniel McBrearty, a Londonderry man who was held for three months in 1989 solely on what proved to be a false test for Semtex ingredient RDX, said: "In the aftermath of the Maguire and Birmingham Six cases, the laboratory had a chance to clean out the stables, but this shows they never took the opportunity."

Mr Howard ignored clear warnings from Lord Taylor, the Lord Chief Justice, that action was urgently needed to improve the forensic service 18 months before the disclosure.

Lord Taylor warned Mr Howard in November 1994 that specific remedial action was "urgent and overdue". He told the Academy of Forensic Scientists that the Home Secretary's "silence on the issue was deafening".

Mr Howard's lack of action led to accusations in the Commons that he had displayed a "disastrous combination of arrogance and ineptitude" in his handling of the matter.



Heseltine courts Beijing

WITH 280 business executives in tow, Michael Heseltine arrived in the Chinese capital on Monday to drum up trade for British firms, eager to capitalise on noisy Sino-American squabbles to scoop up lucrative deals, writes Andrew Higgins in Beijing.

The deputy prime minister's visit, which will also include Shanghai and Hong Kong, came only days after China and the US announced tit-for-tat economic sanctions in a row over copyright piracy. The latest round of trans-Pacific flak-shaking is unlikely to result in a full trade war but should help distract attention from Britain's quarrels with China over Hong Kong.

British merchants have long grumbled that Governor Chris Patten's attempts to expand democracy in the colony have hurt their commercial interests in China.

Despite Mr Heseltine's boasts of

more than £1 billion worth of new business during a mission to Beijing last year, Britain continues to be the laggard in the China trade. It exports more to Taiwan than China, which buys far more from Germany, France and Italy than from Britain.

British exports to China fell by 2.4 per cent in 1995. At the same time, Chinese exports to Britain — more than double its imports — rose 18 per cent.

China has sought to drive a wedge between Europe and the US, dangling multi-million-pound deals for countries willing to take a less robust stand on human rights.

Last month Beijing placed an order for 33 European Airbus planes, ending its previous preference for US Boeings. The switch, though probably motivated more by price than politics, was presented by Beijing as a rebuke to Washington.



Chancellor Kenneth Clarke was hustled into Nottingham Trent University to receive an honorary degree amid protests by students opposed to the award, made for services to the county PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID JONES

Cabinet clashes over Europe

Patrick Wintour

TWO of John Major's three most senior ministers clashed on Europe last week when the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, became the first member of the Cabinet to call for a repatriation of powers from the European Union.

His demand came as the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, attacked Tory Europhobes and warned that disengagement from Europe would leave Britain as a "Switzerland with nuclear weapons".

Conservative officials insisted that Mr Howard's outspoken attack on the powers of the Strasbourg judges had been cleared with the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, and did not contradict the Govern-

ment's European white paper. But sceptics were delighted that Mr Howard has taken up their claim.

Speaking to the European Research Group in London, Mr Howard said a multi-speed Europe "could allow those countries which wish to amalgamate their institutions to do so while permitting other states for example to remain within a single market, but outside a political union. This may indeed mean that some states would be able to repatriate powers which are currently exercised by Brussels."

The Prime Minister has endorsed the idea of a multi-speed Europe, but Mr Howard is the first Cabinet minister to spell out the possibility of reclaiming powers.

Mr Howard also delivered a

fierce attack on the European Court of Justice, accusing the Strasbourg judges of overstepping their powers and pursuing their own political agenda.

Mr Howard insisted Britain should remain within the union, but also claimed the beef ban made it much more difficult to make the case for membership.

His remarks, inevitably seen as an attempt to keep up his profile in the crowded battle to lead the sceptics, came as the Chancellor battled to voice the case for Europe inside the Conservative party.

Mr Clarke said: "In an era of rapid change, the European option offers us a leverage on world events which we could no longer, and would never, enjoy on our own."

Tit-for-tat to end spy row

Ian Black

FOUR British diplomats are being expelled from Moscow and four Russians from London in a negotiated conclusion to the most serious East-West spy crisis since the end of the cold war. Both countries hope relations can now return to normal.

Russian officials in London called the British move "unjust, unfounded and unacceptable retaliation".

Britain never denied Russia's allegations that it had arrested a Russian spy in the act of broadcasting secret information to London. But Britain did challenge Moscow's initial demand for the expulsion of nine Britons as disproportionate.

The Foreign Office said that Russia's final position had been given to the British ambassador, Sir Andrew Wood, by the deputy foreign minister, Sergei Krylov.

The Foreign Office minister, Sir Nicholas Bonsor, then called in the Russian ambassador, Anatoly Adamishin, and gave him the names of four embassy staff to be withdrawn, avoiding the harsher word "expel".

Neither side has published the names of those being expelled.

Oxfam presses retailers

Helen Nowlaka

A LEADING charity is putting pressure on high street fashion retailers to guarantee decent working conditions in factories in developing countries which supply their stores.

Oxfam's Clothes Code campaign urges retailers to ensure that staff in Third World factories are not exploited through excessive hours, intimidation or brendline wages. Consumers will be asked to write to chain stores asking how the people who made the goods on sale are treated, and where clothes were manufactured.

By increasing awareness of the poor treatment garment workers routinely endure, Oxfam hopes to create a tide of public opinion which will persuade all stores to implement codes of conduct.

The charity has already questioned the UK's five leading clothes retailers, the Burton Group, C&A, Marks & Spencer, Next and the Sainsbury Group, about conditions at their overseas suppliers.

The amount of clothing chain stores buy from abroad varies. Marks & Spencer says 77 per cent of its garments are made in the UK, while the Burton Group, whose stores include Debenhams, Top Shop and Burton Menswear, imports about two thirds of stock.

In an intensely competitive and

fast-growing market factory owners minimise overheads by forcing staff to work 12 hour days or longer in sweatshops for minimal wages.

Conditions frequently contravene the UN declaration of human rights and the International Labour Organisation's conventions on minimum standards, which governments in many of the countries with the poorest standards have signed.

Shelagh Young, co-ordinator of the Clothes Code campaign, said retailers are being asked to address their responsibilities. Oxfam favours co-operation between suppliers and retailers backed by independent monitoring and spot checks rather than boycotts of the worst factories, which would lead to job losses.

There is evidence that fear of consumer criticism is having an impact. Last week C&A announced it was updating its code of conduct for suppliers and had enlisted an independent auditing company to ask factory managers about working practices. Those unwilling to co-operate will find their contracts terminated.

There are limited signs that some factory bosses want to improve conditions. In Bangladesh the Banat factory, which makes baseball caps for export, offers staff discounts on treatment at the local hospital and a hostel for single workers. The factory's output is 58 per cent higher than at comparable businesses.

In Brief

NEARLY 2,800 asylum-seekers were deported last year after their applications were rejected — an increase of more than 35 per cent over 1994.

BRITISH Airways' 3,100 pilots are threatening to bring the airline to a halt, despite being offered bonuses of up to £6,000 each as part of their share in a £94 million employee dividend, one of the biggest ever paid by a UK company.

GOVERNMENT plans to give M15 sweeping new powers constitute a serious infringement of civil liberties and breach Britain's obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights, legal experts say.

THE former chairman of Barings Bank, Peter Baring, admitted that he and other directors must "share responsibility" for its collapse after disastrous trading deals by its Singapore-based trader, Nick Leeson.

A THIRD of 15-year-old boys admit carrying weapons, according to research by Exeter university, which suggests teenagers feel safer when armed.

TWO paedophiles who lived out a fantasy of abducting, sexually abusing and murdering a small boy were given three life sentences each. The case has led to calls for a national register of convicted child sex offenders so their moves can be monitored.

A PUBLIC health inquiry has been launched in Cornwall following the discovery of a cluster of leukaemia cases in one class at a secondary school in Camelford, the town at the centre of a major water pollution incident eight years ago.

WARNING letters are to be sent to 100,000 homes offering free tests to households that may be exposed to dangerous levels of radioactive radon gas in areas previously thought to be radon-free.

POLICE have begun a murder inquiry after a man was stabbed to death in front of his girlfriend in a "road rage" attack. Comment, page 12.

A POLICEMAN who claimed she was subjected to nine months of humiliation and victimisation by three male colleagues lost her case for sexual harassment. The case raised disquieting claims of routine sexual bullying in the force.

THE BRITISH writer Helen Dunmore was awarded the first Orange prize for women writers of fiction.

ACTOR Jon Pertwee, best known for his role as Doctor Who, has died at the age of 76.

Railtrack set to yield £1.9 billion

Patrick Donovan

MORE than 600,000 small investors were sitting on instant profits averaging more than £100 as the Government's most controversial privatisation to date, the £1.93 billion sale of Railtrack, provoked renewed accusations that valuable state assets were being sold on the cheap.

The Railtrack shares soared to a hefty premium as the privatised utility made its stock market debut on Monday, because of an unexpected surge in demand which allowed the Government's financial advisers to price the issue at 390p — at the top of an earlier valuation forecast.

Bankers said that the decision meant the Government would raise

about £1.93 billion from the sale of the rail network formerly controlled by British Rail.

The sale will raise less for the Treasury than the £2 billion of taxpayers' money it pays out each year to keep the railway running.

The Government's adviser, SBC Warburg, insisted that the sale price represented the maximum that could reasonably be achieved. It had previously indicated that the fully priced shares would be sold at 350p-390p. But Labour has renewed claims that the issue was underpriced.

The Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, said that privatisation would save the taxpayer money because Railtrack needed to invest £8 billion over the next five years.

As part of the staggered-sale offer, the first instalment in the partly paid shares was priced over the weekend at 190p for British retail investors and 200p for institutions. The number of shares available to big City investors was reduced in order to meet demand from small investors.

With the proportion on offer to the general public subscribed three times over, the shares allocated to retail investors was increased from 30 per cent to just under 60 per cent of the entire issue. This meant there were fewer shares for international institutions, which had exceeded their share allocation by 14 times.

Keith Harper adds: The ceaseless and bitter rivalry between British Airways and Richard Branson's Vir-

gin group is descending into another fierce battle as both sides vie for control of the railways.

Britain's largest airlines are locked in a head-to-head contest to run the crucial parts of the rail network that serve the country's airports. Their ambitious plans include new stations and perhaps fast links between terminals at Gatwick, Heathrow, Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow.

Both sides are to bid for Thames Trains, which offer direct links between London and the two largest airports in the country. But even more significant is their interest in British Rail's West Coast main line, the important artery joining London, Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow.

Bullet surgery for war orphan



A FIVE-year-old African girl with a bullet lodged behind her right eye last week underwent a successful operation after surgeons warned she had a "time bomb" inside her head, writes Chris Mihill.

Doctors at the Norfolk and Norwich hospital, said they decided to operate on Teneh Cole as there was a significant risk of her dying through brain infection.

A team of three surgeons led by Geoffrey Cheney performed a 2½-hour operation, cutting out a wedge of bone on her right cheek to remove the 2cm bullet. Mr Cheney said there was already some infection behind Teneh's

right eye, raising fears it would spread to her brain.

"It was a bit like a time bomb. It could have gone off any time. It may have taken weeks, or months."

He said he was hopeful the operation had reduced the risks of infection by 80 to 90 per cent, and Teneh may be able to return to her home in Sierra Leone next month. She was hit by the stray bullet 16 months ago during the civil war in which her parents died. A British couple, Mark and Caroline Cook (with Teneh, above), who run a children's home there, arranged for her treatment in England.

New judges herald reform

Clare Dyer

THE top jobs in the English judiciary are to go to two of the most radical thinkers among senior judges, heralding what could be an unprecedented era of legal reform.

In an announcement likely to be made this week, Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, is to become Lord Chief Justice, and Lord Woolf, the new Master of the Rolls.

The shake-up has been precipitated by Lord Taylor's premature retirement through illness after only four years as Lord Chief Justice. The change means that Sir Thomas will move from heading the civil side of the Court of Appeal to running its criminal division, while Lord Woolf transfers down from the House of Lords.

Both men are noted for their willingness to approach matters from

first principles, sweeping aside the traditional assumptions which have blocked fundamental reform of the legal system.

Lord Woolf, who chaired the Strangeways inquiry, will soon unveil his blueprint for the most radical overhaul of the civil justice system for a century, making it cheaper, quicker and more accessible.

The appointments should also lower the temperature between the Government and the judiciary over sentencing policy. While both men are staunch defenders of judicial independence, both are less confrontational in style than predecessors such as Lord Taylor and Lord Donaldson.

Sir Thomas emerged as a more acceptable candidate than the front-runner, Lord Justice Rose, a critic of the Home Secretary's "three strikes, add out" sentencing proposals.

Sinn Fein moves on arms

David Sharrook and Patrick Wintour

SINN FEIN'S president, Gerry Adams, said on Monday that his party was prepared to sign up to the six principles established by an international body to resolve the deadlock in Northern Ireland over illegally held weapons.

The announcement was immediately countered by John Major's office, which made it clear that such an undertaking would not be enough to get Sinn Fein a place at the all-party talks, which begin on June 10. "The need for a ceasefire is paramount," a spokesman said.

The Dublin government said the Sinn Fein move was welcome, but added: "The government hope that the statement can be built upon and that the IRA reinstate its ceasefire so that the circumstances will be right for the success of fully inclusive all-party talks on June 10."

Mr Adams's decision may boost his party's standing in the Northern Ireland Forum elections on May 30, which will also elect negotiators to the talks, but appears at this stage not to have any direct implications for a restoration of the IRA ceasefire.

"I will sign up to the Mitchell principles provided everyone else is doing it, and provided they are in the context of proper all-party talks, because those issues are entirely within Sinn Fein's public policy," Mr Adams said.

The Mitchell principles are named after the former US senator George Mitchell, whose three-man team set out the basis for paramilitary decommissioning.

The Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, was sceptical, saying Sinn Fein would have to give "their total and absolute commitment to principles", including ending punishment beatings.

Some believe Mr Adams's announcement is a sign the IRA does not intend to renew its ceasefire in time for the start of the talks, thus embarrassing the Government by forcing it to decide whether or not to bar Sinn Fein, which would undoubtedly stage a demonstration at Stormont and claim its renewed electoral mandate was being ignored.

The move could also be seen as further movement towards a formal separation between Sinn Fein and the IRA, which many observers say would be very difficult to achieve.

UK expels Sudan diplomats

Ian Black

BRITAIN is expelling three diplomats from the Sudanese embassy in London in line with new United Nations sanctions designed to pressure the Khartoum regime to hand over suspected terrorists, it was announced on Monday.

The Foreign Office said the diplomats were being given a month to leave; the remaining 12 will have to give prior notice of trips outside London while entry visas will be denied to members of the Sudanese government or military.

The UN Security Council voted on April 28 to impose diplomatic and travel sanctions on Sudan because of concern over complicity in what it called acts of terrorism.

It demanded that Sudan extradite to Ethiopia three people suspected of trying to assassinate the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, during a visit to Addis Ababa last June.

Sudan insists it does not know where the men are. Western intelligence agencies say this is a lie.

Britain's European Union partners are expected to follow suit with

expulsions on a proportionate basis, though the London embassy is Sudan's biggest in the West.

Sudanese officials, who had been braced for one expulsion following the United States decision to throw out a diplomat, threatened retaliation. Britain's embassy in Khartoum has seven staff.

Foreign Office sources said there would be no justification for tit-for-tat action since the move was the result of a UN resolution.

The sanctions, which took effect on May 10, call on member countries to "significantly reduce" the number and level of staff at Sudanese diplomatic missions and restrict or control the movement of those who remain. The measures can be toughened after 60 days.

Diplomats say Sudan is feeling the pressure and may act against fundamentalist militants. The US is concerned about Khartoum's links with Iranian-backed groups.

The US said last week it was expelling a Sudanese diplomat. In April, it expelled a Sudanese official at the UN, accusing him of helping Muslim extremists plot to blow up the UN and other New York landmarks.

Mr Karadzic loses his grip

IS Radovan Karadzic really on the way out? That would be a remarkable outcome from the Bosnian confusion and intrigue at the weekend. Unfortunately the optimism of the mediator Carl Bildt is unlikely to be justified without a great deal more effort from the international community that he represents. The shakeup in the Bosnian Serb leadership began last week when Mr Karadzic sacked his prime minister, the more moderate Rajko Kasagic. Now Mr Karadzic himself has stepped down, probably under pressure from Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic. But the result is still to leave hardliners in charge of the Bosnian Serb regime at Pale — and Mr Karadzic at best still in the wings. Nor does it do make any more probable the prospect of a multi-ethnic Bosnia, as envisaged in the Dayton peace agreement.

The chances of a multi-ethnic outcome were already negligible before US intelligence officials in Washington said so — and made sure their version got out in the New York Times. Both the Bosnian Serb Republic and the Sarajevo government have been quite happy to see the Sarajevo suburbs stripped of their industrial machinery, and then abandoned by most Serb residents under pressure from Pale. Those who remained were soon subject to intimidation by the incoming Muslim administration. The Serb regime has preferred instead to concentrate the new refugees in areas such as Brcko and Srebrenica to ensure their ethnic dominance. The Bosnian federal authorities in all except one of the Sarajevo suburbs refused to negotiate with the Serb side, and ignored Dayton's provisions for Serb participation in the city's management. As the War Report journal noted last month, "Sarajevo is re-united, but Bosnia-Herzegovina itself has moved ever closer towards final division."

The international force in Bosnia has turned a blind eye to the worst violations. Nato proves to be as weak as the much-maligned UN — indeed weaker, since it is now operating under conditions of peace which should make its task easier. There is still no attempt to deter Serb intimidation of refugees passing through their territory or seeking to return home. The Implementation Force (IFOR) has adopted the lowest possible profile on the apprehension of war criminals. All hopes are still vested in President Milosevic, whose intervention will, it is supposed, somehow magically result in both Mr Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic being handed over to the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

If cracks in the Bosnian Serb regime really are beginning to appear, then it is all the more important for the member states behind for to speed up the process by adopting a tougher stand. First, they must declare their intention of ensuring by military means if necessary that the Dayton provisions are carried out, particularly on the return of refugees. Second, they should postpone the arbitrary cut-off date of December 20, after which the Nato peacekeeping force is supposed to disappear. As Washington (which set the date) is beginning to realise, this will be a bug-out to disaster.

The battle for cyberspace

WILL FUTURE generations look back on this week as the week when a death warrant was signed for the hitherto omnipotent personal computer and with it the dominance of Bill Gates and his Microsoft group? Oracle Corporation, the world's second largest computer software company clearly hopes so. Larry Ellison, Oracle's chairman, regards personal computers as much too expensive, and far too complicated for most people. In order to open up a truly mass market, Oracle has stripped the PC of most of its expensive clothes like hard disk drives and expensive internal chips. Instead he is planning to introduce a "network computer" (or NC) which wouldn't even need today's pricey shop-purchased computer programmes. The NC links up to the world-wide Internet network of computers through a modem and will receive all of its software — from games to spreadsheets — from the Net. Nothing needs to be loaded in. Already an army of software developers is working on globally mobile software (called "ap-

plets") which can be called down from anywhere in the world where there is an NC.

To prove he means business, Mr Ellison at the weekend announced a dizzy array of the world's most powerful electronic manufacturers who have agreed common standards for the new generation of \$500 computers. They include IBM, Motorola, Nokia, Digital and Sun Systems, manufacturer of Java software (which is predicted to dominate the software of Cyberspace just as Microsoft dominated the PC). At the moment some 80 per cent of PCs are occupied by Microsoft's operating system and software. But stand by for the war of the computer giants as Microsoft fights back to avoid being tumbled from its perch just as it outflanked IBM in years gone by. Although Microsoft is also developing Java, the new NCs won't run Windows, the software on which Microsoft critically depends. Computer pundits think that Java software will initially find it easier to crack corporate markets than the home if only because the 70 per cent of homes without a computer will have to plug the new NC into existing television sets and phone lines (thereby ridding family disputes about who uses what), since buying an expensive monitor would undermine the concept of cheap computing.

We are about to witness the digital equivalent of Star Wars as Oracle and others fight Microsoft for control of cyberspace. The one sure winner from all this will be the consumer, who can look forward to falling prices and the prospect of the digital revolution being spread to people who until now have felt themselves too poor to buy a computer of their own.

How to curb motorists' rage

THE first use of the phrase in a broadsheet newspaper was less than two years ago. Since then there have been more than 700 references to the so-called new phenomenon: road rage. It is said to be sweeping the country, with even the most law-abiding citizens indulging in the offence: individuals who use their vehicle to attack other cars or even get out and assault drivers who have infuriated them. A confrontation at the weekend, which led to the death by stabbing of a driver, is bound to prompt more gloomy predictions of the decline of civilisation and the rise of violent man. Time for some perspective.

What is frequently ignored by commentators is the rise in road traffic: up 50 per cent in the last two decades and due to rise by 100 per cent in the next 20 years. Two-thirds of all households in Britain now have access to a vehicle. Some 25 million vehicles are registered in the country — up 5 million in a decade. Not only is there more chance that people with quick tempers, identity problems or pathological fantasies will have access to a vehicle but they are also, with the decline in alternative transport, more likely to be using their vehicles.

Undoubtedly there is a small minority of pathological drivers, who need to be identified because of their suicidal — and homicidal — driving habits. There is a second group of jobs, intent on causing trouble to the vulnerable by tail-gating or other dangerous tricks. Mobile phones are the best deterrent to these troublemakers. But there is a third group of drivers, conventional and normally law-abiding, who may flip. It would be worth some police research.

There are some obvious ways in which cars can make people more aggressive, even if there were no traffic jams or road blocks. There is the power, the illusion of the driver being in total control, and the "distance" which it creates between people in different cars. No driver needs to look the other in the eye. There is enormous power at the touch of a pedal. Worse still, airbags and seat straps can give a false sense of invulnerability. Then there is overcrowding, with Britain's roads among the most over-used in Europe. Add these ingredients — potency, distance and overcrowding — together and it is no wonder that aggression rises. People lose inhibition as they get angrier. There are few more powerful weapons than a powerful car.

Yet all is not lost. People do modify their behaviour. Britain has just conducted a very successful "don't drink and drive" campaign. There has been an enormous shift in attitudes. People have recognised the dangers of drinking and adjusted their behaviour. The same principles should be applied to aggressive driving: show motorists the consequences and they may modify their conduct.

West makes drama out of refugee crisis

Martin Woollacott

WHEN the family of Nuruddin Farah, the Somali writer, ran away from a ruined Mogadishu, they left, in the words of his sister, with "our beds unmade, the chairs in our dining rooms upturned, our kitchens unswep, our dishes in the sinks. Our future undone".

They went in ships from Mogadishu to Mombasa, just as Liberians are now going from Monrovia, and just as the boat people now being forced to go home once left Vietnam.

All of these different people were touched, as Nuruddin Farah's father said of his own family, by "the virus of fleeing". That terrible combination of fractured domesticity, of loss of faith in the future, and of the infectiousness of the urge to escape, is something that more and more experience.

Such people have another thing in common: that after the heart-break of leaving a home, and after the initial dangers of flight, the ordeal is rarely over. Then can come despair as refugees are turned away from country after country, or suffer the long slow loss of hope, or of reason, in detention camps.

Yet the numbers of refugees and the internally displaced — those who are refugees in their own country — have now reached 50 million, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). That is about one in 115 of the world population. Twenty years ago the figure for refugees was 2.5 million. There has been nothing on the present scale since the years after the second world war. After that, it was thought, there would be occasional emergencies but never again an international vista of suffering, homeless people.

Now events continuously generate refugees, and it is hard to think of this as a problem that will one day be over. Somalia had looked after hundreds of thousands of Ethiopian refugees before being overwhelmed by disaster itself. And, among those fleeing Liberia in the overcrowded tubs that have set out from Monrovia, there are men and women from Sierra Leone who had first fled to Liberia from the civil war in their own country.

The ship which the Ghanaians have just allowed to land is called Bulk Challenge. It is aptly named. The challenge of refugees sharpens precisely because of the growing numbers. Rich and poor countries alike fear the costs and the disruption of accepting refugees on a large scale. They also fear the precedent, because there is no denying that once an immigration "chain" is set up, for whatever reason, it is virtually impossible to stop, even when conditions in the stricken country improve.

As is well known, everywhere in the world governments are taking measures to keep out immigrants. The German constitutional court last week upheld that country's new regulations, while the French government is waverling at this moment over contentious recommendations from a parliamentary commission on immigration. The US Senate has just pushed through additional measures aimed at curbing illegal

immigration. The European police agency recently declared that the smuggling of illegal immigrants was its "main concern".

None of this is supposed to affect the "genuine refugee", but naturally it does. In any case one kind of immigrant status tends to blur into another. What, for instance, would be the status of those on board the Liberian ships? Most would certainly not qualify for asylum. They are merely fearful people fleeing a bad and dangerous place, and looking for somewhere tolerable in which to begin new lives or to wait until things are better at home. Those who successfully flee war and chaos tend to include many of a country's educated class, the natural leaders, the technically qualified — the human material that is vital to reconstruction.

Considerations of this kind reinforce the argument of the UNHCR that the movement of refugees is a problem that should never be considered in isolation. The reports commissioned by Sadaka Ogata, the High Commissioner, in 1993 and this year describe the same tragedy in three acts.

In the first phase, there is specialist knowledge of impending disaster but a refusal by governments to listen, on the grounds that warnings are too a penny, and what is only potential can be ignored. Then comes the crisis and an intense flurry of public concern, fundraising, and aid-giving. For example, in the first two weeks after the scale of the Rwanda tragedy became clear, \$2 billion was pledged, a sum of money which, as some relief workers have sourly pointed out, could, if spent previously in Rwanda, have seriously altered the social and political situation there for the better.

Finally the third phase sets in. Public interest fades, aid drops off, but the refugees remain, as they do in Zaire, where a million Rwandan refugees still struggle to survive in the camps. The UNHCR and the non-governmental agencies, are then left to cope, with dwindling funds. This last phase is also a critical time of mistrust between the countries in the affected region and those distant from it.

Anxious to deflect the refugee stream from themselves and to show their own public opinion that something is being done, distant countries work manfully to persuade those in the region to take the refugees. Money will be given, and, in time, a quota of those displaced will be accepted in Europe or the US. Such promises tend to get forgotten, or compromised as time goes on.

This sad graph, in which governments act and public opinion reacts only at the height of a crisis is a chart of inadequacy. The choice is not between a cold closing of the doors and open house: it is between a rational policy of prevention and management, one that will not always work but would usually mitigate the consequences of war and political breakdown, and allowing ourselves to keep repeating the self-defeating pattern of alternating engagement and disengagement with the crises that send so many families out from their homes, their lives unswep, their chairs overturned, their hazards of escape and exile.

Le Monde

New Bosnia party upsets nationalists

The government and the opposition have been wroth-footed by an ex-prime minister's ambitions to unite the country's ethnic communities, writes Rémy Ourdan

THE recent announcement by the popular former prime minister of Bosnia, Haris Silajdzic, that he was forming his own party with a view to fighting this year's general election threatens to disrupt the political equilibrium established by the nationalist parties.

Both President Alija Izetbegovic's Party for Democratic Action (SDA) and the opposition parties are fully aware that Silajdzic's Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina (SBiH) is in a good position to influence the outcome of the election, which is expected to be held by September at the latest.

Now that the first unofficial election salvo has been launched, the SDA, a nationalist Muslim party, is mobilising its troops and looking into possible campaign themes. At its first public meeting, held in Zenica the day after the SBiH's founding convention, Izetbegovic addressed 20,000 people.

Overshadowed by the powerful SDA, Bosnia's opposition parties hardly opened their mouths during the war. It was a time when they were concentrating all their energies on thwarting Serb and Croat separatist designs.

Those parties — the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the Independent Republicans, the Social Democratic Bosnian Union (UBSD), the Liberal Party and the other tiny parties — now have two good reasons to snap out of their torpor. First, the three nationalist parties are poised to win the elections once again, thus confirming Bosnia's division into three ethnic entities. Second, Silajdzic might be seen by the electorate as the only person who embodies a multi-ethnic alternative — which would have the effect of pushing the Social Democrats, Republicans and Liberals even further on to the sidelines.

The opposition parties and Silajdzic's SBiH may soon come to an agreement with a view to setting up a "national Bosnian bloc", which would set out to defeat the nationalist parties.

Selim Beisagic, mayor of Tuzla and president of the UBSD, confirmed these partnership plans on

May 12. The possible alliance will probably not be formalised until the official opening of the election campaign in June or July. Problems remain over the control of key ministries if the alliance wins the election.

Silajdzic, a former close adviser to Izetbegovic, clearly represents a danger to the government. His decision to form his own party has already thrown the SDA's executive committee into confusion. Ten leading members have left the ruling party to join Silajdzic, while others have been forced to step down.

This jockeying for position has had the effect of making the SDA leadership much more radical. The ruling party, long riven by different tendencies, has rallied round its hardliners and become more homogeneous. This is evident from an internal memo setting forth the arguments the party plans to use during the election campaign. It refers to the 1990 elections, which brought to power a coalition of three nationalist parties — the Muslim SDA, the Serb SDS and the Croat HDZ — which shared a determination to undermine their ethnic differences.

Six years later — four of them spent fighting — the SDA is again basing its argument on the defence of the "Muslim people", while apparently giving little thought to a possible "Bosnian people". Worse still, the memo urges Muslims not to repeat the mistake they made in 1990, when some of them voted for non-nationalist parties, "those opposition parties whose ranks included future war criminals".

Social Democrats and Liberals who have consistently defended a multi-ethnic Bosnia are thus described as "war criminals", whereas no mention is made of the separatist policies of the SDS or HDZ.

Faced with this new *de facto* coalition of nationalist movements, the opposition thinks it is in with a chance of winning the elections and preventing the planned splitting up of Bosnia.

But to achieve its aim of a reunified Bosnia the opposition will have to look farther afield than just the territories controlled by the Bosnian government's army. It will have to find allies in the "Serb Republic"



Helping hand... an Egyptian UN soldier hands out sweets to Bosnian children. But the international community will have to do more if plans for a multi-ethnic Bosnia are to succeed

and in "Herzegovina", the statelets controlled by Serb and Croat separatists.

But that will not be possible until the basic liberties (freedom of movement, a free press) have been restored. In Serb and Croat territories, totalitarianism has such a stranglehold that the opposition's ambitions seem doomed to failure unless the international community firmly commits itself to a process of democratisation.

With the SDA becoming increasingly radical, the Bosnian press has been speculating on the personal role played by President Izetbegovic. Some papers have reported rumours that the creation of Silajdzic's party

may have been discreetly encouraged by Izetbegovic himself.

A recent opinion poll published by the weekly Dani gave Silajdzic the highest rating of those running for the top job (42 per cent), well ahead of Izetbegovic (27 per cent), while no other politician managed more than 5 per cent.

But Silajdzic's SBiH has no operational structure and no branches in the separatist territories. It looks as though only a coalition of opposition parties will get the better of Bosnia's powerful nationalists, whose victory in 1990 — with the firm backing of Belgrade and Zagreb — led directly to the bloody war that has just ended. (May 15)

Home economics tests Kohl's resolve

Lucas Delattre in Bonn

IN THE light of the latest tax revenue forecasts published by the German finance ministry on May 15, it looks unlikely that the austerity measures announced by Bonn last month will be enough to absorb the country's public deficit from 1997 on.

Because of the depressed state of the economy and the high cost of unemployment, the estimated tax revenues of the federal state and the Länder will be lower than earlier forecasts of DM 21.7 billion (\$14.2 billion) in 1996 and DM 66.5 billion in 1997.

According to the federal finance minister, Theo Waigel, the new forecasts will not deflect government

policy. Rumours had suggested the figures would be even more disastrous. But in addition to the plan to save DM 50 billion outlined at the end of April, further cutbacks will no doubt prove necessary — unless the government decides to increase VAT from 15 to 17 per cent, as has been suggested by several senior members of the ruling coalition during the past few days.

However, when Kohl announced his exceptional austerity measures he may not have expected to arouse as much opposition as he has from two of the government's main partners in negotiations: the trade unions and the Länder.

The unions are flexing their muscles. Strikes have been breaking out all around the country at the

instigation of the seamen and port workers union, the OeTV, which represents 3.2 million public-sector employees. The union is pushing for a 4.5 per cent rise in salaries this year. The state, meanwhile, is looking at a "zero increase" so that it can put its finances back on an even keel.

The DGB federation of German trade unions, which represents virtually all the country's union organisations, has called on its 9 million members to show their determination, and it has promised "a long, hot summer".

Limited industrial action is due to culminate in an all-union demonstration in Bonn on June 15. The unions' main aim is to block a plan to reduce sickness benefit, which is due

to become law in the next few weeks, and to get the government to scrap legislation making it easier for small and medium-sized companies to make redundancies.

But it is with the Länder that negotiations will be the most tricky. They are not prepared to accept the sacrifices demanded of them, and their president-ministers said, as much when they met recently, they will have a chance to reiterate their views to Kohl when they meet him next month.

The leaders in the Länder feel that the government's plans will rob them of substantial tax resources (chiefly as a result of the abolition of the wealth tax), and they will fight them as hard as they can, particularly in the Bundesrat, the federal council, that represents them in Bonn. (May 17)

Shine put on single currency

COMMENT

THE economic forecasts published on May 15 by the European Commission in Brussels may well give rise to optimism and restore confidence, which is itself regarded as an important ingredient of recovery.

They make reassuring reading: after the economic doldrums that lasted from the second half of 1995 to early 1996, activity is set to pick up strongly — boosted by a favourable economic and political environment.

The take-off is expected to occur on such a scale that by the beginning of 1998, when Brussels is doing its sums in preparation for the transition to the Euro, at least seven countries, and possibly more, can reasonably be expected to meet the Maastricht criteria and thus move on to the promised land of a single currency.

It is only when that aim, on which everything else now depends, has been achieved, and the European Union is consolidated, that the proceedings of the Intergovernmental Conference responsible for reforming the community's institutions to allow for the possible membership of Central European countries will be able to get off the ground.

The Commission's optimism is not false, even if it is hard to subscribe to it wholeheartedly. On paper at least, given some particularly favourable factors such as very low interest rates and the dynamism of the EU's trading partners, and given also the member countries' avowed determination to reduce their budget deficits, there are grounds for looking forward to a non-inflationary recovery.

But there are two important preconditions: the medicine imposed on public finances must not kill the patient before it effects a cure; and the patient must not resist treatment.

It would be a big mistake to discount the warning spelled out to the French government by last December's wave of strikes.

Similar unrest could occur elsewhere — even in Germany, whose celebrated social consensus is being seriously eroded.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl seemed in a determined rather than an optimistic mood during his Brussels visit two days ago. More than once, he stressed the problem of unemployment. The outlook is bleak in that department. The Commission knew it had to look into the problem, despite the difficulties involved.

That was the aim of the "pact for employment" proposed by its president, Jacques Santer. He may have felt discouraged by the icy welcome his suggestions got from employers. Yet this is the area that offers the best chance of nipping serious problems in the bud. (May 17)

Special on Life

French disdain for tarnished Riviera

Holiday-makers are abandoning the sunny south for the stark beauty of the Atlantic coast, writes **Marie-Pierre Subtil**

JEANNE AUGIER, owner of the Negresco in Nice for the past 38 years, is not a happy woman. In 1994, for the second year running, her world-famous luxury hotel made a loss of \$1 million. Only her personal fortune allowed her to avoid laying off any of the 200 staff.

Nice is the hardest hit of the Côte d'Azur resorts. But the whole coastline is smarting from recession and the changing tastes of French holiday-makers, who account for half its tourists.

Although the Côte d'Azur remains the second-most visited region of France after Paris, it is losing ground. In 1985, 8.5 million people stayed on the coastline of the Var and Alpes-Maritimes départements. That figure was widely expected to rise to 10 million by the end of the century. Instead, 1994 and 1995 stagnated, at just under 8 million visitors. To make matters worse, people now come on shorter trips than they used to.

Local tourist industry professionals think the French are staying away because of competition from cheap Third World countries, because of steep prices ("an unfair reputation") and because the Côte d'Azur has lost its "glamorous image".

Environmentalists see it differently. Patrice Miran, a Green regional councillor says: "Nowadays the Côte d'Azur is the same as Paris, except it offers a view of the sea and has no Métro. In July 1994 the ozone content of the air in Nice was 197 micrograms per cubic metre, well above the European standard of 180. The inhabitants of nearby Monaco were warned, but nothing was done in Nice."

The area is now paying the penalty for the 1980s building spree that made many people rich but ignored the need for green spaces, public transport and garbage disposal. As one tourism worker puts it, "the Côte d'Azur is a city 80km long, a bit like Los Angeles".

Tastes have changed, as can be judged from the success of "green tourism" in the mountains of the

northern Alpes-Maritimes, which caters for people looking for greenery and quiet surroundings rather than night-clubs and sleek hotels.

Gérard Yvos, manager of the top-notch Hôtel Martinez on the Croisette in Cannes, claims that "there are still plenty of people who like to swank about in their convertibles and yachts".

But that kind of demand has plummeted in the past 10 years. The occupancy rate of luxury hotels is now about 50 per cent, and certain prices have tumbled.

Property prices are down to their 1987 level. Parisians are increasingly losing interest in the area: they accounted for 16 per cent of buyers in 1988, and only 7 per cent in 1994.

Many in the tourist industry are eating humble pie. "We had it too easy," admits one. "The world moved on and we were left standing." Another says: "You always think you'll stay at the top for ever. When you've got everything going for you, you don't make any effort to be nice."

Figures suggest that the Var has been less hard hit than the Alpes-Maritimes. But locals complain just as much about the slump in trade. For the first time, La Calanque, a three-star hotel in Le Lavandou, was not full this Easter. Gone are the days when it was patronised by Cocteau and Picasso.

Annie Ravier, who runs a chic ready-to-wear boutique in the town, says: "Celebrities still come here, but they stay in their villas. All we can offer them are traffic jams and the smell of chips." Ten years ago, friends and relations queued up to get invited to stay at her attractive home: "There were always at least 20 of us. Last summer, the most guests I had at any time was six, and this year no one has so far called me to see if I have room."

So, where have all the tourists gone? Many have chosen Brittany. When Eric, a Parisian executive in his thirties, got back from a holiday on the Mediterranean coast in 1994, a colleague raved to him about a little island off Brittany. Within weeks Eric had visited the island and bought a barn there. What really pleases him is the tide chart he puts above the mantelpiece each time he goes.

The islands of Ré, Belle-Ile and Noirmoutier are now like St-Tropez in the seventies. Instead of roasting



Burn out... the Côte d'Azur is no longer viewed as a glamorous resort by French tourists

in the sun and napping in the shade of olive trees, the "in" thing to do nowadays is to clamber over rocks, gathering mussels.

The Atlantic coast, and especially Brittany, seem to offer the "return to basics" that television commercials keep on plugging in these stressful times. Adman Vincent Grégoire reflects a general feeling in the advertising profession when he says: "The Mediterranean has an image of laziness around, the eighties, Bernard Tapie. Nowadays successful captains of industry like François Pinault, the Leclercs, Yves Rocher and the Bolloré family all hail from Brittany. There's something genuine about the Atlantic — when things go wrong, you confront the elements."

Elizabeth Lefebvre, editor of the bimonthly magazine *Maisons Côté Ouest*, says: "In the old days people would fantasise about living in a Provencal *bastide*; now they can't wait to put on their wellies and oilskins."

Like all those who are exploiting the trend, Lefebvre talks about "a return to nature, to the simple things in life". The author of one of the articles in her magazine claims that only the élite is concerned by this vogue. "Most human beings, fascinated as they are by the sun king, continue to stampee south," writes Eric Ollivier. "But an enlightened minority would never dream of preferring permanent blue skies to the continuous invention of wind and cloud, to the countless vintage of *appellation contrôlée* rain."

"An enlightened minority" is perhaps not quite the right word, even if it confirms the opinion of those who see the whole phenomenon as a snobbish fad.

In the summer of 1994, the west coast had 8.6 per cent more visitors than in 1993; and in 1995 7.8 million people spent their summer holidays in Brittany, compared with 7.2 million in 1994 and 6.8 million in 1993. The local tourist authority modestly put this trend down to good weather.

The Church has even come to be regarded as a spearhead of opposition to the president, ever since Monsignor Rubiano, archbishop of Bogotá, who asked if Sampor could possibly have been unaware that his campaign was financed by drug money, replied: "It would have been similar to not seeing an elephant in one's living room."

The Colombian bishops put out an official statement in February denouncing "the country's moral decline". But because they were concerned not to get involved in the scandal they always identified only one culprit — "drug trafficking".

The Church has consistently rejected repeated accusations that certain parishes have benefited from traffickers' largesse. It has also preferred to ignore rumours that traffickers go to light candles in certain churches before sending off a big consignment of cocaine.

That being the case, the Church's statement would seem to be yet another example of the wave of self-recrimination that has been sweeping the country — and which has prompted many political observers to argue that the judiciary's investigations into corruption in high places has many of the characteristics of a collective psychosynthesis.

Coming in the wake of 1995, a year dominated by occasions celebrating the end of the second world war, the present controversy shows how difficult it still is for Germans to bury their past.

Colombia's Church fails in its 'duty'

Anne Proenza in Bogotá

A DOCUMENT published by Colombian Church leaders, meeting recently in Bogotá, unexpectedly suggested that the nation's notoriously corrupt political community may have been the victim of a poor Catholic education.

The document concluded: "What has happened to our Church's teaching and evangelical duty? Is it not a fact that most of the country's political leaders, who can now be seen to have played a leading role in the present upsurge of cynicism, corruption and mendacity, were educated in our schools and received evangelising messages in our parishes?"

President Ernesto Samper, who is under investigation for allegedly having used drug money to get himself elected, studied, as did several of his ministers, at Bogotá's Javeriana University. It is run by Jesuits — some of whom took part in the recent meeting of Church leaders.

The Catholic Church takes an active part in Colombia's political and public life.

But never before have its leaders adopted such a self-critical tone. Up to now they have lambasted the government's role in the drugs corruption scandal that has destabilised the country for almost two years.

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The Washington Post

Medals Row Rumbles on After Suicide

Bill McAllister and John Mintz

ADMIRAL Jeremy M. "Mike" Boorda, who killed himself after questions were raised about two of his Vietnam-era decorations, may have had a right to wear the combat "V" pins after all, according to a 1965 Navy awards manual and interviews with former top military officers.

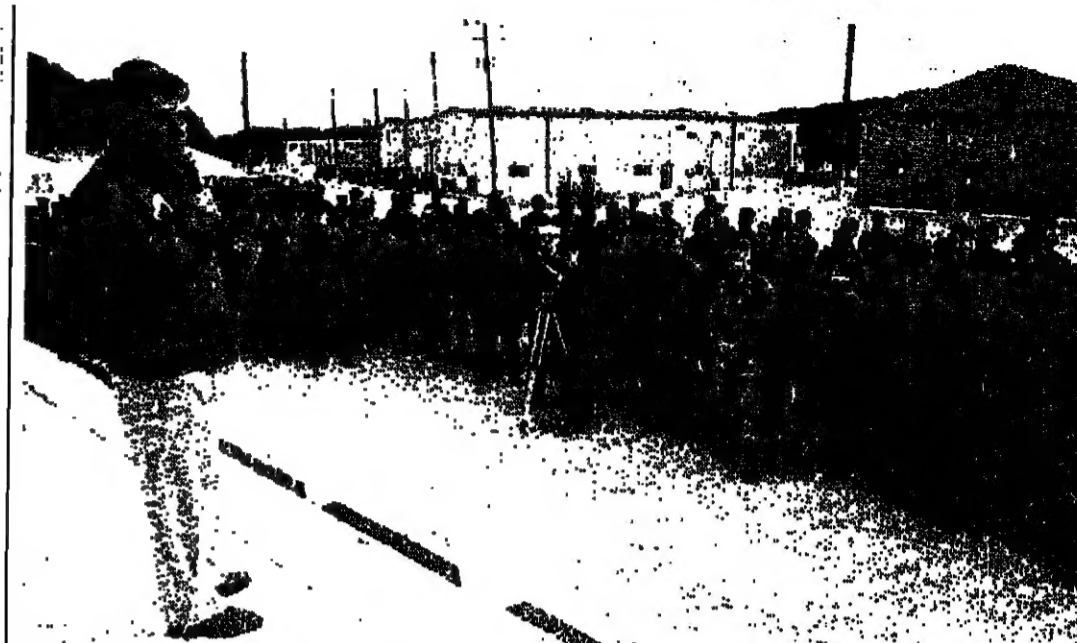
That disclosure came as the military mourned the loss of Boorda, the Navy's highest ranking officer, and struggled to understand the reason for his suicide. Boorda, 56, shot himself at his home in Washington on Thursday last week. He did so shortly after being told two magazine reporters were coming later in the day to question his right to have worn two tiny bronze pins normally awarded for combat duty.

Defense Secretary William J. Perry, speaking last week at Armed Forces Day celebrations, dedicated the day to Boorda and said his death was "a loss to the Navy and the nation."

Boorda killed himself after leaving two notes expressing concern that the controversy over the combat "V" pins would destroy his reputation and damage the Navy. Reporters with a small news service that searched the awards record contended Boorda did not have a right to wear the pins, saying that his award citations failed specifically to give him that right.

However, the Navy awards manual issued in 1965, appears to vindicate Boorda's decision to wear the "V" pin on at least one of the ribbon decorations at issue — his Navy Commendation Medal.

The manual says that the "V" pin can be worn on the Navy Commendation Medal, if the award "is for acts or services involving direct participation in combat operations." Former chief of naval operations Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr. said in an interview last week that the language in the 1965 manual leaves "up to the interpretation of the individual" whether the "V" can be worn. According to the citations for both the medals at issue, Boorda served



'A loss to the Navy and the nation'... Admiral Boorda at Camp Mitchell in Rota, Spain, last year

on ships off Vietnam that engaged in combat operations.

The manual did not list the other decoration at issue, the Navy Achievement Medal, as one for which the combat "V" would be awarded. But Zumwalt said he was confident Boorda also could properly wear the "V" pin on that ribbon. "You just assumed a ribbon authorized in a combat area [as Boorda's was] carries with it the 'V'," Zumwalt said. He said he routinely told sailors they were authorized to wear the "V."

Joseph Trento, bureau chief for the National Security News Service — the organization that challenged Boorda's medals and tipped off Newsweek magazine and ABC News — rejected Zumwalt's arguments. Trento said that only the secretary of the navy had authority to award the "V" pins in the written citations — and Boorda's citations did not mention the pins. "The Navy is going to have to face up that he [Boorda] was wearing medals he wasn't entitled to. This was not an innocent mistake."

The Dallas Morning News quoted Navy Secretary John Dalton as saying that whether Boorda was entitled to wear the "V" is "something that will have to be reviewed." Zumwalt's views were backed by several former officers, including James K. Jobe, commander of the ship on which Boorda served when he won his achievement medal.

Pentagon and law enforcement officials, speaking on condition they not be named, offered new details of the two suicide notes that the admiral left. In the notes, Boorda suggested he was not killing himself because he believed he had been caught in a lie, but because he feared the media would be so skeptical that his act would be blown out of proportion, military officials said.

"The sense... was that reporters wouldn't believe it was an honest mistake, and perhaps sailors wouldn't either," a Pentagon official said. "Boorda [wrote that] he didn't want to give Navy critics another opportunity to give the Navy a beating."

Boorda, the only former enlisted man to rise to the Navy's highest ranking job, spent much of his time in the post disentangling the service from scandals and embarrassments over issues including sexual harassment and naval aircraft crashes, and Navy officials believe he feared questions about his medals could cause the Navy the kind of bad publicity he strove to avoid.

Boorda wrote one note to his wife Bettie and another was addressed to two of Boorda's Navy friends, and a Pentagon official described it as saying at the top, "For the Sailors."

Boorda wrote one note to his wife Bettie and another was addressed to two of Boorda's Navy friends, and a Pentagon official described it as saying at the top, "For the Sailors."

"That's vintage Boorda," said the official, referring to the admiral's well-known concern for the welfare of even the most junior seaman.

Navy officials have said Boorda was informed by a senior aide of reporters' questions concerning his medals only hours before his death. However, officials have also said Boorda had known for at least 10 months of media interest in the medals. Cmdr. John Carmon, the admiral's spokesman, informed Boorda in July that official records about his decorations were being sought through a Freedom of Information Act request filed by the National Security News Service.

This is a preliminary ruling; the challengers will now have an opportunity to produce this evidence, which Chief Justice Rehnquist says should not be "an insuperable task".

Congress and the Clinton administration are equally to blame in this situation. The penalties for crack possession and sale are far out of line with those provided for offenses involving other narcotics. The U.S. Sentencing Commission sought to correct this disparity last year, but its proposal was fought by the White House and rejected on the Hill.

It may be true that prosecutions simply reflect facts that crack is the drug of choice for blacks while other races prefer powder. But because of that very fact, it is incumbent upon the government to show that these disparities are justified and that the racial impact is incidental. We don't believe that case can be made. No matter what the lawmakers set out to do, they have crafted a law that is perceived as racially discriminatory, and they should change it.

Drugs Trial Opens Race Divisions

EDITORIAL

IN 1885, a Chinese national living in San Francisco successfully challenged a city ordinance prohibiting the operation of laundries in wooden buildings. He demonstrated that 200 Chinese who had applied for permission to open such a business were turned down, while 80 other applicants who were not Chinese were granted permits. The U.S. Supreme Court held that the law was being enforced in a racially discriminatory manner and struck it down.

Twenty years later, another Chinese national in the same city sought to overturn his conviction for setting up gambling tables by alleging that the law was enforced only against the Chinese. But he lost in the U.S. Supreme Court because he failed to show that people who were not Chinese violated the law but were not prosecuted.

The Supreme Court cited these precedents last week when it decided yet another California case of alleged selective prosecution. Five African American defendants charged with federal crack offenses sought to obtain extensive files from prosecutors to prove their claim that they had been unconstitutionally targeted because of race.

It is true that those convicted of crack offenses, 90 percent of whom are black, face sentences far more severe than those convicted of cocaine offenses, most of whom are Hispanic and white. But here the court found the defendants' evidence was incomplete. They demonstrated that all 24 individuals convicted on crack charges in a single year were black. But they produced no evidence that whites, Hispanics and Asians similarly situated were not prosecuted.

This is a preliminary ruling; the challengers will now have an opportunity to produce this evidence, which Chief Justice Rehnquist says should not be "an insuperable task".

Congress and the Clinton administration are equally to blame in this situation. The penalties for crack possession and sale are far out of line with those provided for offenses involving other narcotics. The U.S. Sentencing Commission sought to correct this disparity last year, but its proposal was fought by the White House and rejected on the Hill.

It may be true that prosecutions simply reflect facts that crack is the drug of choice for blacks while other races prefer powder. But because of that very fact, it is incumbent upon the government to show that these disparities are justified and that the racial impact is incidental. We don't believe that case can be made. No matter what the lawmakers set out to do, they have crafted a law that is perceived as racially discriminatory, and they should change it.

Sins of the Child Visited Upon Parents

OPINION
Ellen Goodman

WHEN I was growing up, we had a neighborhood father who was, by general consensus, an impossible man, a terrible dad.

Yet when his son got into Harvard, the man underwent a metamorphosis in the neighborhood's opinion. Many of our parents said in wonder, "Well, he must have done something right."

It was as if the father's IQ had been raised on the back of his son's SAT [Scholastic Assessment Test] scores. This bewildered us because we knew the main thing this father had provided for our friend was a hurdle to overcome.

Now I recognize this as the flip side of the blame that a child's failure casts on his parents. When the child does wrong, we almost always think the adults must have done something wrong.

parenting's long haul also know about the close calls, the there-but-for-the-grace-of-God moments. We know about good parents whose kids went wrong all by themselves.

These are the mixed feelings, the mixed experiences that every parent brings to the story of Susan and Anthony Provenzano, the Michigan couple who have been found guilty of being bad parents.

Earlier this month, the Provenzanos were convicted of a crime for their son's crimes. Under a "parental responsibility law", they were fined for failing to supervise their son.

In this sorry tale, one thing was clear: Alex Provenzano, now 16, was out of control and is now serving a one-year term. He was a drug-using, church-robbing, one-boy crime wave.

Today, we're worried about families that break down and violence among the young. We're trying to get control every way we can. So in 10 states, laws can now hold parents responsible for child offenders. But in 50 states, new laws also treat child criminals as responsible adults. In most states, the courts will take a 6-year-old out of the hands of neglectful parents. But in these 10, the law demands that parents keep their hands on anyone under 18.

These parental responsibility laws allowed the legal system to judge, the Provenzanos. But ironically, the

parents' rights bill now before Congress demands: "No federal, state or local government... shall interfere with or usurp the right of a parent to direct the upbringing of the child."

We are embracing such contradictory efforts out of a flailing uncertainty. We don't know how to put together the Humpty Dumpty of family. Nor do we know the fail-safe formula for child raising. What combination of parents and genes and communities produces the perfect product?

We have always held parents responsible for child abuse, child neglect, child support. But the Provenzanos are not Fagin-like parents who set the church up for their son to knock off. They're not evil. At worst, they are ineffectual.

Nevertheless, a country that knows little about restoring relationships and has done even less to help parents succeed has turned to punishing failure. Susan and Anthony Provenzano's crime was having a son who committed crimes. And so the Bible has been turned on its head: the sins of the son have been visited upon his parents.

Elderly in Africa Lose Their Status

Stephen Buckley in Kawaala, Uganda

ZARIA NAKANWANGI, 60, did not plan to be the sole provider for her five grandchildren. She did not plan to be trudging through 10-hour workdays at this age. Nor did she plan to spend her last days weary and worried and bitter.

But when AIDS killed her two sons in the late 1980s, Nakanwangi's dream of a tranquil, joyful later life died with them. Her sons' wives could not care for the children because the women were bat-

ting AIDS, too. Other relatives could not afford to take them in. That left her.

"It was then my obligation to take them," said Nakanwangi, who lives in this village outside Kampala, the Ugandan capital. "I was expecting a lot from my children in old age. I expected to have peace. Now I will spend my last days working very hard."

Nakanwangi's lament is echoed throughout sub-Saharan Africa, where the elderly, once the only protected class in most of the continent's societies, today find their privileged status endangered.

AIDS, which has killed thousands of African couples, has made many elderly people full-time parents again, particularly in the areas of East Africa most affected by the disease.

Urbanization throughout the continent has made children feel less obligated to their grandparents, most of whom live in rural areas. In places such as Kenya and Uganda, an estimated 80 percent reside outside urban centers. And increasing poverty has eroded a time-tested system that once compelled adults to provide financial support for elderly relatives.

Those factors, combined with poorly run or nonexistent governmental social security systems, mean many of Africa's elderly are left without a safety net.

"The tradition of supporting and caring for the elderly has become weaker and weaker," said Camillus Were, director of HelpAge Kenya, a nongovernmental organization that works with Kenyan elderly.

Researchers estimate the elderly at 5 to 10 percent of the continent's 720 million people. The United Nations has projected that by 2025 Africa will see a massive increase in people over 60.

Historically, African societies have conferred great prestige on the aged. They were wiser. Their

blessings, and their curses, were thought to hold enormous force. They helped rear grandchildren. Young people sought their advice.

But during the 1970s, young adults flooded African cities, with their promise of jobs and the faster pulse of urban living. The ties that bound them to their elderly relatives frayed. "Basically, the elderly were left behind," Were said.

Then, as many of the continent's economies sagged, jobs dried up. Suddenly, even many children committed to caring for their elderly relatives could no longer afford to. In many countries — such as Uganda, Kenya and Nigeria — annual per capita income has dropped to below pre-independence levels.

Opposition Is Key to Strong Democracy

COMMENT
Jim Hoagland

IN THE swamp of dubious campaign promises and assertions inflicted on electorates around the world in this year of democracy run amok, one verbal jewel sparkles as incontrovertible, irrefutable and irreducible.

It comes from Svetlyana Goryacheva, deputy speaker of the Russian Duma and Communist Party honcho. She is senior enough in the party to have been dispatched by candidate Gennady Zyuganov to Washington earlier this month to reassure Americans that the Communists will abide by democratic rules if they win this summer's presidential election.

"We want to clear up misunderstandings in American circles," Goryacheva told a gathering of think-tankers assembled by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "We recognize we made mistakes. We know we need an opposition."

No argument there, Svetlyana. Seventy years of Soviet Communist rule made the point for you. In a different way, Russia's four years of non-Communist rule have also underlined the importance of a loyal but free opposition.

The quality of a nation's politics and ultimately its governance can best be judged by the quality of its organized political opposition. That reality is spotlighted by this year's wall-to-wall electioneering in India, Italy, Israel, Japan, Russia, America and elsewhere.

A society can be administered efficiently and even fairly for a relatively short period by one like-minded group operating with complete power — Sparta, Napoleonic France and early Colonial America come to mind from history, while Singapore is a contemporary example. But without a vigorous and constructive opposition to shape and present alternatives, even the most efficient political system will corrupt itself.

Even as it is accepted — rhetorically at least — by Russia's Communists, the notion that an effective opposition is a necessary gauge of societal health is increasingly disputed by Third World ideologues like Lee Kwan Yew of Singapore, who treats political opposition not only as superfluous but automatically seditious. Propagandists in Singapore and China reject human rights and full democracy as

Western imperialist attacks on Asia's "traditional values."

Similar arguments are heard in Africa, where tribal customs and rivalries supposedly make multiparty political systems impossible, and in Arab nations of the Middle East. Across the Third World, nations have betrayed the hopes and promise of the era of decolonization by failing or refusing to establish political systems that respect and protect opposition forces and their supporters. Many of these states then invented phony rationales of political and cultural underdevelopment to keep power.

India provided stunning evidence to the contrary this month with its 11th free election in which the ruling Congress Party lost control of parliament. Russia's election is another key battleground in the struggle of ideas about the nature of culture and its adaptability to democracy and human rights.

The Soviets built a gulag universe to contain and destroy their opposition. But they wound up destroying themselves. Out of power, they have been part of a rotten, obstructionist and insurrectionist opposition to President Boris Yeltsin. Their mutinous actions pushed Yeltsin into increasingly authoritarian acts to hold on to power.

Russia has thus been locked in a cycle of provocation by a destructive opposition and overreaction by Yeltsin. This pattern recalls the Orwellian predictions frequently heard in the Soviet era that a loyal opposition could not take root in Russian soil.

Russians cannot simply defeat an opponent, I was told on a number of occasions by Soviet diplomats or intellectuals. Russians are culturally obliged to smash and destroy an opponent, to make sure there will not be another fight another day or some sort of compromise.

But the fact is that for all of the campaign's imperfections Yeltsin and Zyuganov have thus far fought it by democratic rules — and are likely to continue to do so. The best Russian observers of Yeltsin I know discount threats by some Yeltsin aides to cancel the elections to prevent a Communist victory (if only because Yeltsin cannot be sure of mustering enough military force to make a cancellation stick).

This is an election that can reshape global assumptions about culture and democracy. What the parties that lose do with their defeat will in some ways be as important as how the victors behave afterward.

Neighbors Want Yeltsin As President

David Hoffman in Moscow

THE LEADERS of 11 former Soviet republics, fearing a Communist victory in next month's Russian election would threaten their independence, called on voters last week not to abandon President Boris Yeltsin, who is facing a stiff re-election challenge.

In a meeting at the Kremlin, the other leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States made no effort to hide fears that election of the Communist Party candidate, Gennady Zyuganov, would lead to chaos in Russia and potential conflicts elsewhere in the former Soviet Union.

Zyuganov has called for "voluntary" restoration of the Soviet Union and advocated a "great power" nationalist ideology that is worrisome to the newly independent states. Many of them have sizable ethnic Russian populations and fear pressure and domination from Moscow if Zyuganov is elected.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian said the former republics "shall never rally around Communist Russia... We shall part company with Communist Russia."

The heads of state endorsed a statement committing themselves to supporting democratic and market reforms in Russia. But their comments left no doubt of their endorsement of Yeltsin. "We support the current political and economic course of the current president, Boris Yeltsin," said President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine, "and count on its successful continuation."

"I hope the people of Russia will make the right decision and support the course of reform of Boris Yeltsin," said Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev.

Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of Kazakhstan, said "the entire world is concerned about the future of Russia," and "no one wants to see Russia falling apart and sliding into a civil war."

"We are horrified to think that the Russian people may be carried away by the nostalgia for the past," he added, saying that a victory for the Communists would lead to the "disintegration of the commonwealth."

The Commonwealth of Independent States, which includes Russia and the other former Soviet republics except the three Baltic states, was formed after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. It has been a weak umbrella group as the states have sought a way out of economic and political turmoil.

Bolivia Poor Unable to Rest in Peace

Gabriel Escobar in La Paz

BURYING a loved one in an illegal cemetery involves all kinds of perils, and this morning Yolanda Flores has run into most of them. She cannot find the grave of her grandson, who died of pneumonia just weeks ago. Worse still, the drug addicts and alcoholics who live off the dead are surprisingly alert, and their thin grins and offers of help are menacing.

A lot happens to the bodies buried in La Paz's 48 illegal graveyards. Dogs get at them. Addicts use the newly interred to upgrade their wardrobes so frequently that many families now bury relatives the way they began their lives. Gold fillings are pried loose. Occasionally, there is commerce in skeletons, with medical students the grateful buyers.

All of which explains the surreal dialogue that Flores falls into when one of the men ambles over. Too poor to pay for a legal plot, the family is now paying the consequences. "It was around here. Have you taken him away?" Flores asks. "How could you have taken him away?"

"No one has taken anyone away, señora," he replies.

And then suddenly: "Here it is! Here it is!" Flores says. She bends over a tiny mound of dry dirt. Dead flowers had covered the shiny can that served as a vase.

The Little Flame, as this cemetery is known, is grim proof that people in the poorest country in South America continue dying far beyond their means. The neighborhood association in the slum tries its best to maintain order — Flores, for example, said she was told to bury her grandson in an "empty spot."

But these *ad hoc* efforts only accomplish so much, and Jorge Dockweiler Cardenas is not impressed. A city councilman who is trying to get his colleagues to address the cemetery crisis, Dockweiler says clandestine burials, aside from being inhumane, present an enormous health problem. There is, for one thing, the problem of leaching.

Bodies are buried without caskets. Inevitably, rain washes away both the grave and the decaying remains of the deceased. Dockweiler calls it "an organic juice with all kinds of bacteria."

Dockweiler, an architect by training and an authority on La Paz's urban woes, argues that these improper burials may affect every single resident and may even be responsible for chronic stomach ailments in the population. Pigs rooting around the edges of the Little Flame show how bacteria can be transmitted up the food chain.

There is no easy solution to the problem, partly because the cash-poor city tries to attend more to the living than the dead. Dockweiler says one solution is regulating "acceptable" illegal cemeteries like the Little Flame — it apparently is a model compared to others — and eradicating the rest.

He also proposes a tax on burials in the fancier private cemeteries, with the money used to pay for individual internment. But he is not hopeful that a solution will be found soon. "La Paz has so many needs," he says. "Everything is important."

Bargain on Canada's Border

Bill McAllister

GASOLINE is sold by the liter, the beers at the local taverna are priced in Canadian dollars and the community supermarket features refrigerated tubs stocked with the store's best seller: two-pound slabs of Kraft American cheese.

Point Roberts, or "The Point," as its 950 year-round residents call it, is the northwest-most corner of the continental United States, a tiny, tree-covered peninsula nestled against the Canadian border. Created in 1846 by Washington diplomats who refused to put a downward divot in the parallel line

marking the boundary between the United States and Canada, the Point today has become a schizophrenic enclave that allows Canadians to escape their country and its often high taxes.

It's all quite legal, overseen by customs and immigration officials from both countries who stand watch at the one border crossing on the British Columbia road that most residents of the Canadian province know leads to cheaper prices.

Everything — and everyone — in Point Roberts depends on the Canadian dollar and its value against the American dollar. "Whatever the

Canadian dollar does, Point Roberts does," said real estate salesman Jim Julius.

Even with interstate-quality highways connecting British Columbia to Washington state, getting to the Point takes about an hour from nearby Bellingham, the seat of Whatcom County, Washington. That assumes quick stops at the two border stations, one at Point Roberts and another at Blaine, north of Bellingham.

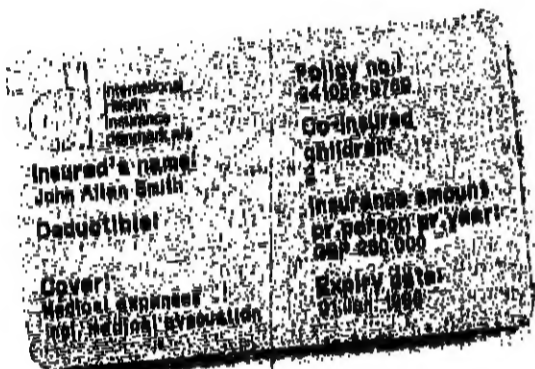
Then there is the telephone problem. A call to nearby British Columbia is billed as long distance. Julius's solution: two cellular telephone accounts, one for Americans, the other for Canadians.

That's nothing, of course, compared with the weekend problem. Especially summer weekends, when the Point is jammed with British Columbians escaping from Vancouver to the hundreds of summer cottages they own along the community's three beaches.

Vancouver Sun writer Larry Pynn, who spent many a weekend here, described the behavior of young Canadians as not much better than college students on their annual pilgrimage to Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

"The Swedes do it in Denmark, the Brits do it in Spain, the Germans do it, well, pretty much everywhere, so why shouldn't Canadians do it in Point Roberts?" Pynn wrote in a 1993 newspaper article. "After all, the place should rightfully be ours anyway, right?"

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Beneath a Jamaican Moon

Liesel Schillingger
HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK
By Terry McMillan
Viking, 388pp. \$23.95



ILLUSTRATION: JILL KARLA SCHWARTZ

IT'S A HAPPY woman in charge of her own fate de facto an unsympathetic character — someone people don't want to read about and cannot empathize with? If so, the defenders of serious literature will no doubt join in unison to eject Terry McMillan's rip-roaring new book, *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*, from the Eden of politically and academically correct approval. Because, in the book, no woman weeps; and Stella, in fact, revels. She revels and even gloats at being a woman, revels in being in solitary possession of her mind, her body, her child, her house, her finances, her beauty, her creativity, and finally, of her sexy, strapping young dream lover, whom she finds and triumphantly lashes to her side. If this is unserious literature, it is unserious literature of the most serious kind, perhaps even, in its own way, revolutionary.

Terry McMillan is the only novelist I have ever read, apart from writers of children's books, who makes me glad to be a woman. Children's fiction overflows with examples of authoritative girls who control their worlds, fictional and real; from Laura Ingalls Wilder's own Laura, to C.S. Lewis's Lucy, to E.E. Nesbit's Anthea, Lloyd Alexander's Eilonwy, and of course L. Frank Baum's Dorothy — or, perhaps more remarkably, Baum's Ozma of Oz, who actually chose to be transformed from a boy to a girl to claim the Emerald City throne.

But the moment the cloak of girlhood is thrown off, and writers choose to write about grown-ups, any sense of empowerment, opportunity or strength in the female characters is bestowed only to be smashed sooner or later, as the women run through such hurdles as pleasing men, struggling to find a mate, supporting children, and, more often than not, coping with emotional, physical or intellectual bullying, or paying the wages of their own sentimentalized sin.

I was afraid at first that this impression might have been an absurd exaggeration; but then I looked at my bookshelf of favorite books — books I have read and reread, and care about deeply — and was astonished to find my theory abundantly confirmed. In the As to Fs alone — Amis (both), Austen, Brontë, Cervantes, Dickens, Dostoevsky, Dos Passos, Duras, Eliot, Faulkner, Fitzgerald and Forster — I remembered female characters who, however interesting their tales might have been, principally sought male sanction or suffered, one way or another.

Further down the alphabet, in Shakespeare and Wharton, Graham Greene, Hemingway, Virgil, and Maugham, I recalled doomed Lady Macbeth and Lily Bart, prostitutes and spurned wives, the weeping women of the Trojan wars, weeping women, in fact everywhere. (In fairness, Trollope also makes me glad to be a woman; the exception proves the rule. But then, in his time, and even now, he was often dismissed as an unserious writer.) This seems to beg the question: Does serious literature want women to be subject or else object? McMillan abundantly proves that if it does, it shouldn't.

Fans of McMillan's previous novels, the hugely popular *Waiting To Exhale* and the more critically esteemed *Disappearing Acts* and *Mama*, will recognize McMillan's authentic, unpretentious voice in

every page of *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*. It is the voice of the kind of woman all of us know and all of us need; the warm, strong, bossy mother/sister/best friend. Fans and enemies alike will also get their share of the brand names that McMillan uses to signify arrival into this country's upper-middle class: BMW and Calvin Klein, Nordstrom's and Macy's.

Having just spent an evening with a friend who crowed ecstatically all night over a new pair of Gucci loafers, which did in fact seem to lend her some special glow, I don't find the product emphasis fustious or crass. Even Emerson recognized that for a woman, which McMillan indubitably is, "the sense of being perfectly well-dressed gives a feeling of inward tranquillity which religion is powerless to bestow." But readers of this book will find more than wise words and icons of wealth; they will find the rare and perhaps unique example of a courtship in which the woman hunts down her own love object herself — and finds the man willing to be wooed.

At the outset of the book, we learn that Stella, 42, an affluent single mom in San Francisco, has gone a little stale, like champagne that's been uncorked and not tasted for too long. She's content, but she spends more time taking care of business and conducting lengthy Molly Bloom-like internal harangues with

herself and external harangues with her sisters than trying to find happiness for herself. So, defying her stagnation, she packs herself off to a luxury resort in Jamaica, where from get-go, every young stud's eyes swing appreciatively in her direction. Sure enough, Stella soon finds the "real thing" in the form of a noble, gentle, fine 20-year-old man, Winston Shakespeare. When McMillan describes Stella's first vision of the boy wonder, you want to howl with laughter at her audacity, and shout, "Go, girl!"

"... When I look at him I almost have a stroke. He is wearing baggy brown shorts and has to be at least six three or four and he is lean but his shoulders are wide broad and as he walks toward my table all I can think is Lord Lord Lord some young girl is gonna get lucky as I don't know what if she can sing you... when he smiles he shows off a beautiful set of straight white teeth that've been hiding behind and under those succulent young lips."

Name another time you've read a man objectified by a woman in this way, if you can. Stella, of course, turns out to be the lucky girl, and soon finds that she's hooked. Back in California, her sister Vanessa encourages her, while her sister Angela moans in despair at the folly of a May-December romance in which her sister is not May. Vanessa boldly comes to Stella's defense: "Men have been dating younger women for [expletive] centuries and does anybody say anything to them?" she spatters. Women may talk like this to each other, but few of us write like this.

To those who say this could never happen in real life, I offer the evidence of the young dreamer I met last summer, whose gallantry and openhearted effusiveness restored my own faith in romance. McMillan's book may be the stuff of fantasies, not reality; but if fantasies could be bought whole, every woman in the country would be lining up to buy them from Terry McMillan. And maybe then other writers would dare to write them, too. And maybe this is happening right now — and fiction at last is about to understand that women are ready to read about themselves not only as schemers or sufferers, but as the adventurous heroes of their own lives.

Secrets of the Coal Mine

Bruce Cook
ROSE
By Martin Cruz Smith
Random House, 364pp. \$25

MARTIN CRUZ SMITH quite took our breath away when he revealed that he had managed to do only about two weeks of on-the-spot research for his convincingly Russian novel, *Gorky Park*, before he was asked to leave by the KGB. Two weeks? He must have taken everything in through his pores, forgotten nothing and written it with darty prayers before an icon.

Well, you can be sure that Rose, every bit as convincing in its way, took a good deal longer to research. For one thing, the novel is set in the 19th century in a corner of England that became known to most of us in America only in this century. For another, it shows a casual mastery of the details of coal mining in the 1870s, as well as a commanding overview of life in those communities where all depended upon it.

Although rich in historical and social detail, *Rose* is nevertheless cast in the form of a mystery. Smith has chosen as his sleuth one Jonathan Blair, a mining engineer raised in America who has been completely captivated by his experience of Africa. Blair wants only to return to the Gold Coast. He is offered a berth back by Bishop Hannay if he will go to the bishop's demise (Hannay is also a coal lord) and find the Rev. John Edward Maypole, a curate who vanished two months before. Maypole, it develops, was engaged to be married to the bishop's daughter, Charlotte.

Blair hears that the last person with whom Maypole was seen was Rose Molyneux, a "pit-girl" — one of the many women who worked sorting the coal dug from the mile-deep tunnels of the Hannay mine. He falls — or perhaps better put, slides unwillingly — in love with her. This is inconvenient for his investigation, for as he gets deeper into it Rose seems to be more certainly involved than had been previously suspected. And it proves also to be dangerous for him personally, because Rose has a suitor among the miners, Bill Jaxon, who resents Blair's attentions to her.

As Blair pursues his investigation, he is also expected to be at the call of Hannay in the great house above the town. At dinner he meets Charlotte Hannay, for whom the vanished curate was intended. There is an immediate, and for the most part mutual, hostility between them. It is only toward the end of his stay that the two begin to come to some degree of understanding.

On the day that Maypole's disappearance in the Hannay mine, which took the lives of 76 men, Blair quite reasonably supposes that it had something to do with the curate's sudden absence. Yet all 76 were identified and accounted for. Nevertheless, Blair feels it necessary to go down into the mine to search for his man — or his remains. In fact, he makes two trips, and the second yields the secret. There is, however, a far more surprising revelation awaiting us at the book's end. Rose Jaxon is a secret of her own.

This novel is blessed with the sort of strong narrative line that makes it a joy to read, yet it is also a good deal more than just its plot.

Atlantic crossing for early learning scheme

Canadian trials of a British teaching method have produced startling improvements in reading and writing, writes Peter Kingston

A five-year-old cannot read properly, there is only one acceptable excuse — poor teaching, according to a Canadian academic who has just conducted some compelling kindergarten tests.

Poverty, single-parent families, book-free homes, English as the child's second language... none of these factors is a justification for illiteracy, according to Professor Dale Willows, of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

Her experiment has shown, she says, that an effective teaching method eliminates these factors, which are frequently cited to explain children's slow progress. And it is a British method that has convinced her.

Three years ago, she was shown Jolly Phonics, devised by two primary schoolteachers from Suffolk in England, and published in Chigwell, Essex.

Her interest was immediately aroused, she says. She reckoned the bright and colourful books might be an answer to a problem she had been grappling with: how to combine what she was convinced were the crucial components of a reading and writing programme into a package that would stimulate teachers and children.

She was asked by the books' publisher, Christopher Jolly, to do a trial on Jolly Phonics. The results from 36 senior kindergarten (five-year-olds) and Grade 1 (six-year-olds) classes, half using the book, the others continuing with their own strategies, were startling, she says.

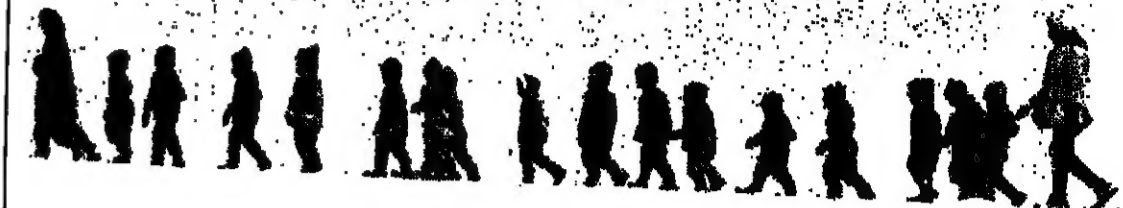
She had deliberately selected schools with high incidences of the factors regarded as plausible reasons for low performance — unemployment, English not the mother tongue, etc.

In standardised tests, barely a fifth of the children in the control group who did not use Jolly Phonics could spell the first four words; and, in, him, make.

However, up to 60 per cent of the other children could tackle these and made good attempts at circle, light, most, reach, enter — the next five words on the test.

As a result, she says, teachers

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS & COLLEGES 19



Child's play... Canadian schoolchildren are benefiting from the Jolly Phonics programme devised by two primary schoolteachers in Suffolk, England

working in three large education authorities in the Toronto region have adopted the British method.

Since the early 1980s at OISE, she has been interested in bridging a gap that she perceived between basic research on reading and teaching practice.

"For the past 20 years in Canada, teachers have accepted the fallacy that reading is a natural process just like learning to talk. It has been assumed that if the right conditions are provided children will naturally develop their reading and writing."

"Twenty years of research have now shown us that this appealing idea is wrong. We need to teach reading and writing," says Prof Willows.

She became alarmed at the worsening results of reading

tests and the burgeoning numbers of children being labelled as "reading disabled".

"Since studies began, clinicians and researchers have known that the incidence of severe reading disability is between 5 and 10 per cent. I was seeing 25 to 30 per cent of pupils in classes being categorised by their teachers as having some sort of reading disability."

Prof Willows became increasingly convinced of the need for structured teaching methods with phonics at their core.

SHE developed what she calls "The Balanced and Flexible Literacy Diet", the key processes in teaching reading and writing which, she says, teachers must understand. She presented the diet earlier this year in a seminar at London

University's Institute of Education.

There are 13 components in the diet. These include: the awareness that language is composed of sounds and those sounds are represented in letters; the need to learn a small group of common words by sight; and the importance of stimulating children with "real" books rather than cat-on-the-mat drills.

Christopher Jolly reckons that his programme has gone into a fifth of British primary schools since it was launched in 1992. But in Canada, where he started later, sales are rising faster. This year they are up 400 per cent, and now he sells as many books in Canada as at home.

The Phonics Handbook is available from Jolly Learning Ltd, Tailours House, High Road, Chigwell, Essex.

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Vertical text on the left margin, possibly a page number or reference.

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BUT NOT 'GET IT'
ON PAPER?

DYSLEXIA

DYSLEXIC CHILDREN - THE SIGNS

Usually Often Sometimes Sometimes ALWAYS

- Indications that the child is lazy or "late developer"
- Slow reading so that the sense is lost
- Slow writing and use of restyled vocabulary of small words, correct spell longer words.
- reversed, rotated or twisted letters when writing.
- curiousness, left-handedness, difficulty in telling left from right.
- a family history of learning difficulties
- difficulty in learning lists and labels in the right order
- A widening discrepancy between the child's intelligence and his performance in reading or spelling using traditional methods of teaching.

FROM THIS ... All kids of yours TO THIS ... My sighted means that things in the distance are clear and near things are fuzzy. The light focuses beyond the retina to coat the back of the eye.

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There will be a memorial service for WR (Bill) Lee, founder of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) at the British Council, 11 Portland Place, London W1N 4RJ on Friday 21 June at 3pm. Friends and colleagues who knew Bill or appreciated his work either in language teaching or for the many other organisations he supported, are welcome to attend.

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INTERNATIONAL IDEA
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The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance is an international organization that works for the promotion and advancement of sustainable democracy world-wide and within this context improvement and consolidation of electoral processes.

International IDEA was founded in 1995 by the governments of Australia, Barbados, Belgium, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, India, the Netherlands,

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The Institute is to include as members, on a basis of equality, governments, inter-governmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations, establishing a new pattern of international co-operation. The Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (Costa Rica) and Parliamentarians for Global Action (New York) have recently become members.

A programme was approved by the Council in November 1995 and focuses initially on four main areas of work:

- Developing Rules and Guidelines - assist in the development of rules and guidelines for normative democratic practice and electoral processes;
- Capacity-Building - provide ad-

vice and assistance to enhance local capacity for democratic development and culture, and for the management and monitoring of elections;

- Applying Research and Learning from Practice - serve as a bridge between academia and practitioners in making research findings accessible, in identifying at an early stage bottlenecks that would benefit from applied research, and in developing methodology for the promotion of democracy;
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QUALIFICATIONS:

The Roster will be composed of experts with senior professional practice (over 8 years experience) in the fields of democracy and/or electoral assistance and experts with limited experience.

Experts would normally have an academic qualification in political, social or economic sciences, or in international law, international relations or related studies.

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dicatory, party system), the electoral process, information and media in democracy, and civic culture and civil society.

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 - Gynaecologists
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QUALIFICATIONS

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Chaos theory

'We cannot work unless it is dangerous. There must be no concessions.' Archaos, the chainsaw-juggling circus act, is back. John Vidal meets its makers

BLAME Dublin. First a great wind came out of nowhere and didn't just blow over but quite shredded one of Europe's biggest, safest, and (let it be said) most uninsured circus tents. Shows had to be cancelled, new tents found. Then a player died. For good measure the festival hosts tried to sue and, for dramatic effect, a hundred armed police surrounded Archaos's army of trucks and wagons one night and ran the show out of town.

The next months were personally tragic, fiscally operatic and almost the end of a rare artistic talent. The circus that had substituted chainsaws, Yamahas and carbon monoxide for horses, sequins and sickly-sweet smiles, went from being one of the largest, most fêted companies in the world to financial oblivion.

Archaos fell to earth in 1991, having just moved into the big time. The directors were beached, the generous French government stuck by them with a minimum grant but the 28 nationalities employed in several huge shows touring three continents at a time were laid off and the bikes and chainsaws sold. Local authorities sigled as the theatrical typhoon passed.

"It was a big disaster," says Guy Carrara who, with Pierrat Pilot-Bidon, started the company and catapulted one of the oldest entertainment forms into the 20th century, probably saving it along the way from heritage chic and death by a thousand sequins.

It has taken Archaos five years to recover, but Carrara is now directing Game Over on tour in London. Pilot-Bidon, who co-wrote the show, is in the south of France trying to organise a parallel circus of old performers, and 1,200 curious Parisians are wondering what's next in the circus anarchists' cookbook.

"Do they still have chainsaws?" asks one man at the Palais de Sports at Vaugirard. "Are they still dangerous?" asks his friend.

No, says one; yes, says the other. Game Over is quite like old times. Archaos is still obsessed with modern life, with the power and influence of technology and the hard edge of the city. It's still loud, if less rough and ready: it's still a circus to run away to — extreme and human. The wildness may be more of the imagination and less in the performances but the company's respect for circus conventions is as strong as ever.

Game Over's thesis is simple enough: that modern times are dominated and exploited by the phenomenon of television. We are the observed generations, says Carrara — always on "Infinity TV" where the virtual, visual world is taking over the physical one. Here it's always 3.38pm, and though you may see the poor cleared from the street, hear the bombs go off and recognise social disease and crime at every step, the news is that there is no more delinquency, no unemployment, and that violence has been eradicated. Be collectively hypnotised, be happy, says Infinity TV.

Archaos learned quickly that if circus starts with the physical and works out to the cerebral then it can have a quite unexpected narrative force. Having surfed the new dangers of the urban 1980s, the company is now moving into the video and multi-media 1990s and is becoming far more visually sophisticated, going less for the gut than for the brain and the storyline. The seeds are here for the company to become genuine purveyors of a new opera of the street, with appropriate choreography and massive musical and visual statements.



Headline grabbing... Scene from Archaos's Game Over, which tells of the danger of the virtual world. PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTIAN SIMONNETTI

But Archaos's tap root is still in rock solid love and respect for traditional physical skills: so how better to show the unreality and ludicrousness — and the wonder — of TV sport than to have men playing basketball literally with each other? Or to show how TV sensationalises than to have doctors walking up walls?

WITH ITS new leaning to techno and rave culture, Game Over is unashamedly young — even if it seems unhealthily obsessed with that eternal French cliché, the pinball machine. At the end, though, the message is positive: in the world of high technology, it seems to say, it is this acrobatic, beautiful, balletic thing called the human body that holds the hope.

"I'm just 42 and here I am between two worlds," says Carrara. Society has moved so quickly, he maintains, that it seems that he was educated in the equivalent of the middle ages and is now looking ahead to the 21st century.

Carrara admits he finds Game Over difficult to understand. "But when I speak to young people they always say it's very clear. They understand the visual much faster. They have learned to live with pictures and the camera. This is a

very special period of great change." In London, Archaos fits snugly with the circus revival that is happening on the British club circuit. Producer Adrian Evans has turned the Brixton Academy into a multimedia experience, with huge techno installations and screens until the show ends on June 2. There are BMX bikes doing 30ft flips and risks taken on and off the stage.

Which is how everyone, including the French government who have put in more than \$300,000, want it. "We cannot work unless it is dangerous," says Carrara. "We like this danger. There must be no concessions. We must be free to do what we want. If a show is no good then you are dead. Each time you play it is a play with death." It's the old Archaos, risking everything and daring to be creative.

Since they were last in Britain Pierrat-Bidon and Carrara, who were born within hours of each other in France, have met, fallen for and married the beautiful Brazilian trapeze artists, the Rache de Andrade sisters. Both women are now pregnant and, by a surreal fluke that seems almost typical of the circus troupe, are expecting their first children within days of each other. It's a sheer coincidence, says Carrara. No it's not, say the people who know them, it's the Archaos factor.

Juggernaut of metal fusion

MUSIC
Adam Sweeting

BILLY CORGAN couldn't resist a touch of irony after the Smashing Pumpkins were dragged out for the third batch of encores. "You're not supposed to like us in England," he told a heaving Wembley crowd.

Vast as the Pumpkins are in their native USA, Corgan seemed almost overwhelmed by the surging displays of enthusiasm and a steady stream of prostrate ravers being carted over the barriers by a huge security presence. But somebody died of a heart attack at a Pumpkins show in Dublin last weekend, so the band must have viewed the scene with mixed emotions.

The unconverted are no doubt confused by the Pumpkins' insistence on ranging across the cross-currents of the last 30 years of rock history.

They provided a potted history of Pumpkinism on last year's double-disc set, Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness, which had everything from gossamer-fine ballads and pseudo-renaissance instrumentals to the crunching hard rock that first got them confused with Grunge. Their stage show doesn't bear much relation to their records. Where their studio sound is a *tour de force* of elaborate sonic layering, on stage they're faster, cruder and paint-mingly raw.

In thundering riff-driven stuff like Where Boys Fear To Tread, the Pumpkins plug straight into the metal tradition.

They climaxed with a 20-minute Silverfuck jam, stuffed with loops and riffs as if the Velvet Underground had mated with The Doors.

Corgan unwound his guitar strings and lobbed them into the crowd, then they concocted a mellow four-part harmony for Farewell And Goodnight. You had the sense that anything was possible.

A Handel on greatness

OPERA
Martin Kettle

ONE OF the few anxieties about David Alden's 1993 production of Ariodante was that all that elaboration and style would make it a hard work to revive. But now Handel's Ariosto-derived drama is back at the Coliseum, looking and sounding even better than ever. This is one of the English National Opera's defining operatic productions of the 1990s, and it is simply not to be missed.

As an opera, Ariodante defies easy description, but Alden has conjured it into an erotically charged nightmare of lust, betrayal and violated innocence, in which the prince's eventual triumph never fully displaces the darker themes. For this revival, Michael Keegan-Dolan has produced wholly new and important choreography, which supplements Alden's original vision with raw power, as well as making sense of the work's otherwise problematic dance episodes.

The ENO has pulled out all the stops to assemble one of the strongest casts at its disposal. At its heart, as in the 1993 production, is the wonderful artistry of Ann Murray, whose Ariodante is even more pointed and expressive than she was before. She simply commands the whole thing — the lightness of act one, the suicidal agonies of the great scene in the second act and the virtuosic triumph of her final act aria — all with equal panache and sincerity. Murray alone is worth the price of admission.

But there is much, much more. Three excellent principals return to the roles they played in 1993. Lesley Garrett is on her top form as Dalinda (Garrett is always better in serious roles than in her more coquettish guises) and Paul Nilon as Lurcanio is musically more secure than he was three years ago. And Christopher Robson repeats



Torch song... Lesley Garrett on top form as Dalinda in the ENO's brilliant staging of Handel's Ariodante. PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD MILDENHALL

occasionally vocally strained Polinesso, and is always the motivating force behind the drama. As if this wasn't enough, the addition of Joan Rodgers, in the crucial and demanding role of the wronged Ginevra, gives this revival tremendous extra bite and musical character, while Gwynne Howell makes a more credible King.

Perhaps Ivor Bolton does not quite match Nicholas McGegan's masterly handling of the score in the original production, but it is a very close run thing. This outstanding revival, following the very different but equally remarkable Xerxes, ought to make the ENO realise that Handel in English should be constantly at the heart of its artistic project.

Over-sexed, underaged and running wild in Manhattan

CINEMA
Derek Malcolm

LARRY CLARK'S Kids isn't one of those films about which you could have no opinion, but possibly the most valuable one would have come from those who, because of its 18 certificate, will not be able to see it.

You can't blame the censor for that. He would have got into grave trouble, given the hypocrisies of our society, had he placed the film in any other category. But it would be interesting to find out, since Clark is determined to "tell it like it is", how many of the age group to which the film applies agree with his findings.

Few, one suspects, in Britain — though most would recognise something, somewhere, even if they refused to admit it to adults.

But this is America — or rather Manhattan, where Telly the virgin surgeon operates. He is introduced to us "sucking face" (necking) with a clearly underage girl. The close-up seems so long and is framed so tightly that what they are doing seems an inevitable prelude to a passionless but urgent approximation of sex. Which it is — but we see less of the mechanics than the first shot implies. "Virgins, I love 'em", Telly eventually says above the soundtrack.

Telly, though the central character, is but one of a group of pubescent teens we follow through a sweaty summer's day.

There is also Casper, a skateboarder who likes to hear about Telly's exploits but can't quite manage them, and Jennie, one of Telly's deflowered virgins, who is HIV-positive because of him.

Jennie undertakes a long search for Telly and eventually finds him deflowering someone else at a party. In a near comatose state after visiting a rave club and taking ecstasy, she is raped by Casper.

The film moves from the Upper East Side of Manhattan through Washington Square and East Village. But you are never quite sure

— and this is the chief fault of the film — where the participants come from or how old they are. There aren't many adults about, at least none that play more than a peripheral part in the film. The context is never properly filled in, perhaps on purpose.

But if that purpose was to encourage us to think of the characters as typical of their generation, all over the world, it doesn't succeed. Telly, Casper, Jennie and the others look and sound typical, but they don't do entirely typical things.

What the film is better at exposing are the secrets most children have from their parents, probably mirroring the secrets most parents have from them. It is also very good at suggesting that the adult world is either too busy or too helpless to do much about it.

One of the most effective sequences in Kids is the hospital scene, where the health-care counsellors go about their business like tired zombies, seeming almost to shrug off the enormities and personal tragedies they face as inevitable consequences of life in a big city.

It's a terrible moment when Ruby and Jennie go for tests and the promiscuous one passes while the innocent fails. But the film isn't so much about the risks children run as about a lifestyle that is all too real, even if it doesn't always have dramatic consequences. To say that most kids of this age screw around, take drugs, party and self-destruct would be absurd. To deny that they would like to, and sometimes do, would be fatal.

Clark's film-making methods are pretty impressive and his cast is extraordinarily convincing. He says that his relationship with his own children has grown since its making. But that might not apply to everyone else who sees it.

In truth, however, Kids underlines very little. It just stares at what it professes to have discovered. I can't remember a movie that so distances you on the one hand while involving you on the other.

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Gray's bare anatomy of solitude

THEATRE
Michael Billington

THE sequel, they used to say in Hollywood, is never as good as the original. In the case of Simon Gray's *Simply Disconnected*, it is actually better.

The play is a follow-up of Gray's 1971 success, *Otherwise Engaged*; but where in that I felt characters were often wheeled on to be deflated by Alan Bates's Simon Hensch, here the overwhelming impression is of the hero's grief and unbreachable solitude.

Solitude may seem an odd word for a man whose day is an endless series of interruptions. Twenty-five years ago he was desperately trying to listen to Parulf; now, he is a widowed, retired publisher, in a sequestered country retreat. But the continuous crunching sound of feet on the gravel path heralds a succession of visitors echoing the patterns of the past.

His brother, Stephen, brings the news that he is about to be ignominiously dismissed as an assistant

headmaster for molesting a 13-year-old boy, Jeff, Hensch's oldest friend and once a literary hack, turned up as a writer of best-selling travel books only to be exposed by his wife, Gwendoline, as a total fraud. And a neurotic young man called Julian bursts in with a gun claiming he is Hensch's son by a casually discarded mistress.

Quite a lot for one day, not to mention the pregnant home-help who may indeed be carrying Hensch's child.

As Gray says, the earlier play was about a man who kept that world at bay by pretending it did not exist; but he is writing, far more searchingly, about a man so weighed down by guilt over his wife's death that he is almost unreachable. Before, Hensch showed a talent to abuse; now he is less an ironic point-scoring than a tragic figure, haunted by the consequences of his actions.

Gray's structure is calculatedly artificial; characters show incredible memory for remarks of 25 years ago and the scene with the gun-toting supposed son is neat rather than dramatically convincing.

But Gray's point, in the words of the old hymn, is "change and decay in all I see" — his characters, however buoyant they may seem, have been warped and corroded by time.

Richard Wilson's production is not without humour but the shiding impression is of Alan Bates as a wonderfully clenched Hensch: his blanched features and ghostly stillness relieved only by a final shocking spasm of suppressed sorrow. Charles Kay as the prissy, pedagogic Stephen, Gawn Grainger as the spuriously successful Jeff and Rosemary Martin as his disipomanic spouse all seize their moments.

But the moving feature of Gray's play is its recognition that we are all the victims of our actions and that the whirligig of time brings in its cruel revenges.

Fact in the theatre is always gripping and Guardian journalist, Richard Norton-Taylor's *Nuremberg*, an edited version of the War Crimes Trial, could hardly be more timely as Duskovic takes the stand at the Hague for crimes against humanity in Bosnia. But while Nicholas Kent at the *Tricycle*

deserves credit for the idea — and for producing one of the best theatre programmes I've ever seen — he has somewhat over-egged the pudding by commissioning three shorter plays on Haiti, Rwanda and former Yugoslavia. Taken together, they make for an exhausting four-hour evening.

NUREMBERG is so strong it could stand on its own. What emerges, as the defendants go on trial, is the variety of moral evasions they offer. Goering, although Hitler's designated successor, denies all knowledge of systematic liquidation policies, while Field-Marshal Kettel, chief of staff of the Wehrmacht, takes refuge in the doctrine of military obedience. Alfred Rosenberg, a Nazi ideologue, hides behind semantic quibbles over the meaning of Aurotung (extermination).

Even on its own, *Nuremberg* raises a whole series of fascinating issues. By focusing on major war criminals, did the trial implicitly exonerate the whole bureaucracy of evil? Did the Allies sweep their own crimes under the carpet? And why has it taken us 50 years to set up a comparable international court?

These and other questions emerge from Norton-Taylor's skilfully edited text and Kent's scrupulously realistic production: the confrontation of Colin Bruce's nervously sweating American prosecutor and Mark Penfold's coolly unfazed David Maxwell-Fyfe with Michael Cochrane's arrogantly impervious Goering is first-rate.

Ideally, *Nuremberg* would be followed by a rightly debated about the issues involved. Instead it is preceded by three short "responses" dealing with its contemporary implications. One of these, Goran Stefanovski's *Ex-Yu* about a woman seeking information about her father's suicide during the Balkan war, is genuinely haunting.

Keith Reddin's Haiti neatly dramatises the specific case of an American officer who was court-martialed for releasing prisoners from a Haitian jail. But Fern O'Sullivan's Rwanda does little more than recapitulate the appalling mass-slaughter of Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

Four plays together is too much to absorb. But *Nuremberg* is indispensable and the *Tricycle* deserves praise for airing one of the key issues of our time; how we respond judicially to the horrors of genocide.



Safe haven... refugees on a UN truck heading for Tuzla, but now they fear they are being forgotten

Marking time in Tuzla

A year after losing their men in the fall of Srebrenica, Bosnian Muslim women and children are still stranded in limbo. **Alexandra McLeod** reports

"IT'S NOT easy when you've lost your son and almost all your family. That's why I would like to go back and find them for myself. Even if they are just bones now, I feel sure that I could recognise them."

Aralic is the only woman in the therapy centre who has agreed to see me. When she starts to talk, her voice is surprisingly steady, but her hands shake uncontrollably and she speaks for 40 minutes without looking up. She is one of the 32,000 displaced persons from Srebrenica now living in makeshift accommodation in the Tuzla canton. Her husband, son and three brothers fled through the forests to escape the Serbs, and she hasn't seen them since.

She outlines in detail the events of her life over the past four years. How when she was first moved out of her village she tried to sneak back every day to feed and milk her cow; how the Serbs chanted, "You think you'll be safe in Tuzla but we'll find you," as she finally stepped on to the bus to safety. She is 35 years old but looks 20 years older; her face is lined and she has few teeth left.

Irfahika, a psychiatrist who treats many of the women, explains: "This is the worst situation in therapist's terms. Many of the women are in a position of waiting and searching and nothing other than that. They can't think about the future. Someone is obliged to find out officially what happened to these men."

Fadma Huseinovic is founder of the Srebrenica Women's Association. She is softly spoken and only loses control of her emotions when she recalls how her husband was led away from her on June 13, 1995. "We took to the streets to demonstrate. It was embarrassing, but no one seemed to be doing anything to try to find out what happened to our men, so we had to do something for ourselves."

The most extreme of the demonstrations she organised included the stoning of the Tuzla cantonal government HQ and the over-running of the Red Cross headquarters, where the director was trapped in

his radio room for eight hours. These tactics brought President Alija Izetbegovic rushing to Tuzla to reassure the women that something would be done. Fatima is still waiting, still disillusioned.

I have been invited to tea by a group of women who have been moved into two houses on the outskirts of Tuzla by Viva Zene, a German funded organisation. Hordes of children run out to greet me, giggling and calling out. Each family has its own room, with a wood-burning stove. There is a water pump outside, and strings of washing hang everywhere. The furniture is sparse but anyone who has a visitor borrows from the others. As I move from room to room, the same small table is carried around after me.

The general mood among the women is one of determined optimism. Alija Fortana informs me with pride that she has taken a diploma in sewing and is keen to be able to gain enough skills to support her four daughters. "I wouldn't go back to Srebrenica. I must get a job here. I am mother and father to my children now."

Every settlement visited reinforces this determination that the women can make something of their lives. Workshops have been set up next to the living areas, and the air is filled with the sound of sewing machines, looms weaving carpets, the click of knitting needles and chatter. One agency has set up a project for the women to breed rabbits, to provide food for the hospital. Everyone on the aid agencies stresses that these communities are to be self-sufficient.

No one wants to admit that the women may have been filled with false hopes of a lifestyle that cannot be maintained. At the moment they are being almost completely sustained by foreign aid agencies and the United Nations. "There is definitely a concern that the international agencies will withdraw too quickly and not match economic development," admits Usha Kar, the representative for Oxfam in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The majority of the women are

from peasant families, unable to read or write. It is difficult to see how they will integrate successfully into city life. Tuzla is surprisingly sophisticated, and its inhabitants have mixed feelings about the peasant women. Samra Gluhic, a Tuzian, who co-runs the Viva Zene therapy centre, admits: "They are different from us." She describes the women from Srebrenica as "almost like children".

There is a prevalent embarrassment among urban Bosnians about their peasant class, a resentment that the entire country is pictured in the West as a rustic cliché. When the women first arrived in Tuzla last July, they were placed in a UN camp at the airport, but were hastily and forcibly removed by local government. Bosnian officialdom was not entirely pleased by the worldwide media attention that their plight attracted.

KLEIJA BALTA is vice-president of the Liberal Party and one of the few women in the Bosnian government. She is also a feminist campaigner, and is candid about the difficulties the Srebrenica women face. "We can't forget them, but our economy is on zero. Everyone in Bosnia is dependent on outside aid, it's not just these women."

In Oskova, 40 minutes' drive from Tuzla, is a collective centre that epitomises the worst problems the Srebrenica women have to face. In one large tent, women and children are crowded together into tiny canvas-walled partitions. Smoky and gloomy, it's hard to believe anyone could live in such conditions for more than a day or two. One woman was screaming, "How do we know they are not going to bury us in our beds?"

The translator explained that there used to be many tents here, until one night all but one mysteriously burned down. The locals say it was an arson attack arranged by men from the local council because the aid worker in charge had not been providing enough backhanders. The remaining families live in constant fear of being burned alive. "We are waiting for someone to come and take us on to the next town," says one woman. "There are other women there — in houses. But we can't move till then. Where would we go?"

Out of the darkness

Kathy Evans reports on the happy ending for a Filipina maid sentenced to death

IT IS NOT often that papers get to report good news, but the tragic saga surrounding the teenage Filipina maid Sarah Balabagan, currently imprisoned in Abu Dhabi for the murder of her employer, is turning out to have a happy ending. When Balabagan walks out of prison in a few months' time, she will emerge a wealthy woman. The last two years of trials and re-trials, and the death sentence handed down last year, touched the hearts of thousands. The donations from anonymous benefactors in the Philippines itself and as far away as Canada, Australia and Europe have been so huge that a special trust fund, worth several hundred thousand dollars, has been set up in her name to help her relaunch her life.

Sarah Balabagan was just 15 years old when she left her rural village in the Philippines to work as a maid in the rich oil states of the Gulf. She had been recruited illegally by an employment agency. At the time, her father, a sharecropper peasant, was earning the equivalent of \$5 per week and sending Sarah to work for an Arab family seemed the only way the family could survive. Her papers were falsified to show her age to be 27, to conform with Emirati law which required all housemaids to be 25 years and over.

She was sent to work in Al Ain, a desert town around 150km from the capital, Abu Dhabi, where she was employed by the al-Baloushi family to look after the needs of their elderly father, Mohammed al-Baloushi. It quickly became apparent that her employer — despite being in his eighties — expected her to cater to more than his domestic needs: within weeks, he was making repeated, aggressive sexual overtures.

Balabagan complained to the agency that employed her, only to be told: "Why not give the old man a kiss?" Shortly after, her employer cornered her with a kitchen knife and tried to rape her. Balabagan managed to wrestle the knife away from him and, desperate to beat him off, stabbed him 34 times.

Overnight, she became a *casus célèbre*, both in the Gulf and at home in Manila. For the Filipino government, Balabagan's case represented another potential political disaster. Only weeks before, the handling of the case of Flor Contemplacion — a maid executed for murder in Singapore — had cost the career of the foreign minister and other officials.

At her trial, Balabagan was sentenced to seven years in prison. At the same time, according to Islamic law, she was awarded around \$90,000 in compensation for the rape of which she accused her employer. There was an immediate outcry from UAE nationals and the al-Baloushi family, who demanded what they were entitled to under Islamic law: blood for blood.

At the subsequent re-trial, ordered by the Abu Dhabi ruler Sheikh Zayed, the presiding judge declared that, as Balabagan's papers showed her to be an adult, the murder had therefore been premeditated. "Testimony given at the second trial by court gynaecologists also threw doubt on her claim of

rape, pointing to the lack of sperm in her vagina. Conflicting testimony given by another doctor for the defence showed evidence of wounds to both her neck and vagina. The judge responded by confirming a new sentence: death.

An immediate international outcry followed. The court's sentence was viewed as barbaric and medieval, and protest rallies were organised at UAE embassies around the world. Anxious to maintain the Emirates' reputation as a liberal country, Sheikh Zayed ordered yet another re-trial. Last October, Balabagan was finally sentenced to one year in jail and 100 lashes.

Despite the lashings, Balabagan is now said to be happy in prison and looking forward to the new life that awaits her upon release. In the Philippines, a special committee headed by the foreign ministry has been established to handle all the money that has come in from around the world. Much of it has been raised locally by a group of Filipino tycoons, among them plastics manufacturer, William Gatchalian, known for his sharp business dealings and his desire to get along with the government. It was Gatchalian who also paid to the al-Baloushi the \$40,000 required in blood money. In addition, around \$43,000 has come in from a French group called Saucer Sarah. The money has been put in a trust until Balabagan comes of age.

Last month, she celebrated her 17th birthday with cakes and presents with other Filipino maids



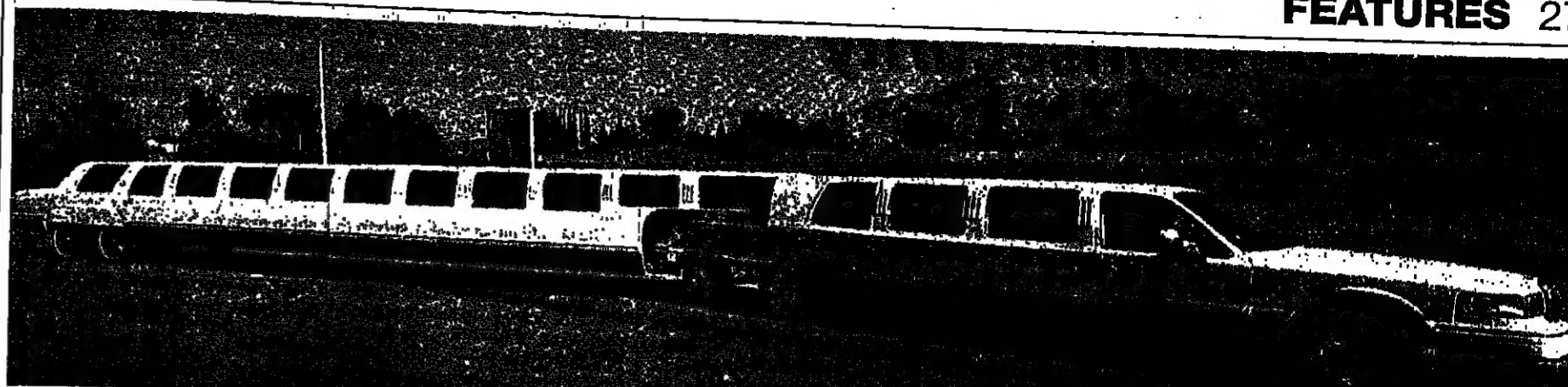
Sarah Balabagan: looking forward to a new life

working in the town. Meanwhile, gifts and letters continue to pour in from around the globe.

"She gets about 15 letters a week and lots of gifts. Last week I took her a box of chocolates which came from a gentleman in Denmark. The week before that, she received a wallet with some cash in it from a family in America," says a Filipino attaché in Abu Dhabi. So numerous have the gifts been that a special store room has been set aside in the prison.

Ahead is the inevitable film: Filipino film producers cashed in on Flor Contemplacion's execution and the story of Sarah Balabagan presents another opportunity to make money. She is said to be negotiating the film rights to her own story.

Despite the happy ending, however, the bitterness remains on both sides. "Do you think Sarah Balabagan's case will bring some attention to the Middle East?" one Filipino diplomat asks angrily. "Last week, the refugees set up by a Filipino welfare agency in two towns in the Emirates for maids feeling abused by their employers housed 22 girls."



A stretch too far... A white limousine belonging to a Gulf sheikh and thought to be the longest in the world has been ordered off the road by Californian police because it is too long. The car, measuring more than 66ft and with 36 seats, was stopped by two highway patrol officers who declared that it exceeded the maximum 65ft allowed in the state. "There's stretching and stretching," a highway patrol spokesman said. A California firm, Ultra Kustom Coach, built the \$1.8 million car for Sheikh Hamad Bin Hamdan Al-Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates. It is available for rent when not in use by the sheikh.

PHOTOGRAPH: JIMMY DORANTES

Letter from China Tracy Fletcher

Lure of the mirage

FOR AMERICANS, the golden West has long been their image of a plentiful Eden. For the Chinese, the booming south and the illusion of Hong Kong are fast giving rise to similar fantasies. As China speeds towards a full consumer economy at breakneck speed, inland and rural communities are emptying and their inhabitants are pouring into coastal cities like Guangzhou and Shenzhen, hoping to hit the jackpot.

Teaching English language and culture to trainee teachers in Chenzhou, an industrial city of 200,000 people on the border between Hunan and Guangdong provinces, I see this worrying progression firsthand. My third-year students, having completed their teaching practice in local high schools, are now seeking employment for the coming academic year. The government will assign each of them to a post as a matter of course. But, for the most part, these are the jobs nobody wants: primary and secondary school teachers in countryside institutions suffering the worst effects of rural poverty, where staff salaries are often months in arrears because the schools simply cannot afford to pay them.

Many students tell me that a position in such a school is tantamount to a life sentence. They complain that once a job in a place like that is accepted, there's little chance of getting out and, few opportunities for promotion either.

So they are setting off in droves to job fairs in Guangzhou. Such trips are forbidden by the college management in a bid to avert critical staff shortages in country schools, but, like many rules in this country, this one seems designed to be broken. My students are well aware that teaching jobs in Guangzhou and the surrounding province are a better than in Hunan, traditionally one of the country's poorest areas. Though the job descriptions are practically the same the salaries are, without exception, higher — 1,000 yuan (\$120) month on average, compared with 350 in Hunan province.

Perhaps most attractive to these youngsters, however, is the fact that, with industries thriving in Guangzhou, they stand a much better chance of shifting direction and changing careers. There the graduates might become secretaries or interpreters in multinational companies, where their competence in English can provide a key to lucrative trade deals with the west.

Many of my students had no de-

sire to become teachers in the first place. They were pigeon-holed into their college places according to their results in the school-leaving examinations. Career choice is a new phenomenon for a country cautiously and conditionally opening its eyes and ears to ideas about democracy from the West.

Take a nine hour train journey directly south from here and you'll find yourself in the "special economic zone" of Shenzhen. From there for passport holders — which excludes most Chinese — it's a short walk across the border into Hong Kong.

Talk of this mirage of a place hangs in the air like an infectious disease. I can teach anything from British Christmas customs to subordinate clauses and somehow loaded questions about Hong Kong will find their way into the discussion. The most popular query is always, will Britain give Hong Kong back to China in 1997?

USUALLY remonstrate that, to my knowledge, the British government has every intention of returning it and that the average member of the British public would be incapable of describing the colony's location, let alone showing any interest in this small but rich plot of land in the South China Sea. However, they remain sceptical and prefer to put their faith in Chinese government propaganda agencies that are currently circulating rumours about British non-compliance. It goes without saying that these young Chinese, like their statesmen, are convinced that Hong Kong belongs to them.

Make no mistake, when Hong Kong is returned to China every last one of them is planning to head there to make his or her respective fortune. When, as part of a discussion class, I asked some of them to imagine what they would be doing in 2000, that 50 per cent said they would be earning a sizeable salary from a Hong Kong-based international corporation. I often wonder just how big they think Hong Kong is. My standing joke is, "but it's only a small island, if you all go there it will sink!"

Many of these young people and their families have lived harsh lives for a long time and they need to believe that there is a pot of gold at the end of this particular rainbow. I just wish that this could be true for every last one of them, and dread the seemingly inevitable day of their rude awakening.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

IS THERE any evidence that the gravitational pull of the moon and/or its brightness affect human, animal or plant behaviour or any other agricultural phenomenon?

FRANK BROWN, Professor of Biology at Northwestern University, reported in the *Journal of Science* (December 1959) experiments carried out on a variety of organisms, most interestingly on oysters.

Oysters open and close their shells in rhythm related to tides. Brown transported oysters in light-proof containers to Evanston, Illinois, from Connecticut. The oysters were put in a dark room in pans of salt water. Within a fortnight they had altered their rhythms to accord with the lunar phases of Evanston. — *Ivor Solomons, Norwich*

THE gravitational force of the sun is some 100 times greater than that of the moon, but because of the moon's more obvious contribution to raising tides and its passage through a regular cycle of phases every 29.5 days, a large body of folklore has grown up about its effect on human behaviour.

Detailed studies have failed to demonstrate a significant connection between the phases of the moon and births, crime rates, traffic accidents or suicides. — *Michael Hilton, London*

WHAT was the last recorded instance of a duel being fought with seconds, at 10 paces, and using pistols?

MY ANCESTOR, Captain George Cadogan, avoided the police to fight a duel with pistols and seconds on Wimbledon Common.

A Country Diary

JEREMY SMITH
MACQUARIE ISLAND, South Pacific. It came on a north-easterly gale, which had ruffled our roofs all night and made puddles below the windows and doors of buildings constructed to withstand foul weather, mainly from the other direction.

The cat, egret was exhausted and bedraggled when Sue, found it in the morning at her seal study site, over the headland behind the station. It was caught without a struggle. Its white plumage was dirty and wet, and the poor bird, could scarcely keep its eyelids from drooping. Presumably it had flown

from New Zealand, more than 1,000km away, and been extraordinarily lucky to have made landfall on this oceanic island a mere 36km long. Lucky, too, to have been found by Sue, under whose care it made a remarkable recovery on a diet of fresh rabbit and frozen fish. It was released in good condition, hopefully to find its way home again.

Vagrant birds are not uncommon here, often shorebirds or waterbirds like the egret, but also small songbirds which seem to have no good reason to venture so far to sea. Oddly enough it is those of European origin that seem to arrive here more often than their native Australasian equivalents. Two, the star-

ling and redpoll, have established permanent breeding populations, forming a subarctic faunal element on this subantarctic island at the other end of the globe.

Others have been sighted as stragglers on several occasions, including song thrush, blackbird, goldfinch and skylark. They are always very timid and wild, in striking contrast to the relatively trusting penguins, skuas and albatrosses whose world they invade. Apparently they have instincts learned in the predator-rich north that were not developed by the avian inhabitants of isolated southern islands. But it seems strange that they should also have this vagabond urge, which pushes them to undertake distant peregrinations across the world's stormiest ocean.

WHAT is the youngest age at which the cause of death can be registered as "old age" by a doctor?

THE UK registrar-general's guidance — in Forms For Medical Certificates of The Cause Of Death Under The Birth And Deaths Registration Act 1953 — states: "In some elderly persons there may be no specific condition identified as the

cause of death."

WHY is Saint George the patron saint of England? And why is he the patron saint of Catalonia? — *Gary Huxley, Barcelona, Spain*

patient gradually falls. If such circumstances gradually lead to deterioration and ultimately death, 'old age' or 'senility' is perfectly acceptable as the sole cause of death for persons aged 70 and over." — *Dr C J Tierney, Widnes, Cheshire*

PROGERIA, or premature senility, is a rare condition that becomes evident in childhood. The affected person dies at an early age but a nine-year-old can have the appearance of somebody aged 90. — *Dr KMH Munro, Canberra, Australia*

Any answers?

FIT has a name, what do we call the narrow channel running vertically from the base of the nose to the edge of the centre of the upper lip? — *Peter O'Connor, Oshamamba, Japan*

HOW has the word "loo" become a British euphemism for water closet? — *Betsy Taylor-Kennedy, Acton, Massachusetts, USA*

HOW should we define working class, middle class and upper class? — *Michael L Cox, Nuneaton, Warwickshire*

WHY is Saint George the patron saint of England? And why is he the patron saint of Catalonia? — *Gary Huxley, Barcelona, Spain*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/4471-242-0986, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 8HQ. Notes & Queries Volume 8 is published by Fourth Estate, £6.99

Professional insecurity

Charles Drazin

David Lean: A Biography by Kevin Brownlow Richard Cohen 832pp £25

WHEN I saw the restored version of Lawrence of Arabia a few years ago, I was entranced by some of the most breathtaking images of cinema I had ever seen. It took time to readjust to the real world. There is a similar sense of epic achievement in Kevin Brownlow's huge book on David Lean.

Concerned to give voice to the people who knew and worked with the director, he has woven his account out of hundreds of interviews. Just as Lean took film to its ultimate, Brownlow has done the same to the form of the oral biography, writing not only what is certainly the definitive account of Lean's life but also an invaluable chronicle of more than 60 years of British film-making.

Lean's formative childhood experience was one of his own worthlessness. His family thought he had "absolutely no brains" and he was outclassed by his clever younger brother. The first time he felt special was when his uncle gave him a Kodak Box Brownie for his 11th birthday. Taking pictures was something he could do, a refuge from a sense of failure. Cinema of-

fered him another kind of escape, but would not have made him feel any more worthwhile in his parents' eyes: as Quakers they disapproved of this tawdry entertainment.

Lean's father, nevertheless, helped his son to get a job with Gaumont Studios. From teaboy, Lean climbed the ladder to become a highly regarded film editor, then in 1942 made a brilliantly successful debut as a director with Noel Coward's *In Which We Serve*. An exquisite eye for composition and an instinctive feel for the rhythm of film were matched by a relentless drive for perfection that no doubt had its root in a compulsion to prove that he was "worth it".

Everything seemed coloured by his insecurity. To be professional was his idea of the highest accolade, perhaps because it could be achieved through perseverance rather than intellect. He was ill at ease with the establishment, which he felt looked down on cinema, but possessed a resolutely conventional standard of excellence himself. "Rolls-Royce did not make an enormous profit on some of their early cars, but they still put on their twelve coats of paint. People couldn't see it, but they were there." The 12 coats of paint he so marvelled at came nowhere near the number of takes he was prepared to run through in search of the perfect shot.

Disarmingly, he also considered

the Rolls-Royce to be proof of the existence of God. "If anybody tries to tell me that a Rolls-Royce has not been made by anybody, it's just come about by chance, I'd think he's mad." His films left so little to chance that they, too, could have seemed like evidence of a Higher Being. In place of the spontaneity of the films of that other great British director, Carol Reed, was a powerful invisible force carefully plotting the characters' destinies. There was a feeling of going to church when you went on to his sets," a colleague commented.

LEAN described Lawrence Of Arabia as the greatest adventure of his life. With the obvious exception of scholarship, he and T E Lawrence had much in common — not least iron willpower and an ability to work near-miracles. Lean's close identity with his subject made Lawrence Of Arabia a very personal film. He had long ago proved that he was a "great pictorialist" — as his hero Rex Ingram had been called — on such classic films as *Brief Encounter* and *Great Expectations*, but now he could almost be called an *auteur* without the word seeming too ridiculous. When his crew filmed the scene of Lawrence hawking his great vision of Arab victory after pondering for a day and night alone in the desert, they must have been reminded of

Lean's own silences: his ability to spend hour after hour staring into empty space in search of inspiration was legendary. "Here's another Englishman going potty in this bloody desert," thought Anthony Nutting, an adviser on the film, when it became obvious Lean had fallen hopelessly in love with all that sand.

His private life inevitably suffered for his obsession. He worked his way through six wives and countless girlfriends. There was a cruelty about the way in which he could cut people out of his life — as Robert Bolt noted, like the excellent editor he had once been. Most of his women would probably have agreed with his third wife, Ann Todd, that he was one of those people who should never be married. "Life has only one meaning for David — his film-making," said another of his wives. "The film is his father and mother and brother and son."

Lean lacked confidence as a writer but hoped instead that a memoir would emerge out of a series of interviews with Kevin Brownlow, whose passion for cinema was equal to his own. When Lean died, Brownlow carried on, determined now to gather all the available evidence. The result is this extraordinary book — nearly 900 pages packed with pictures and detailed testimony. With his dogged pursuit of the truth, his determination to present all sides and his natural empathy for his subject, Brownlow has produced a compassionate but formidably thorough portrait.

Audio books

Brian Jenner

Scoop, by Evelyn Waugh (Cover to Cover, 8hrs, £19.99)

THE brilliance of Waugh's dialogue is brought out by Simon Cadell's gift for characterisation. I sat in my armchair and hooked.

Street Talk, Caryl Watts: In His Own Words (BMG/Talking Volumes, 1hr, £6.99)

CURLY WATTS has a Kafkaesque experience when he wakes up one morning at 4am and feels like a meat pie. He decides to get up and wander round Coronation Street, to reminisce about his life and treat us to his thoughts on relationships and frozen food.

Cricket... The Golden Age (BBC Radio, 2hrs, £7.99)

EW SWANTON is to cricket what Mr Kipling is to cakes. He introduces crackly recordings of luminaries like C B Fry and Jack Hobbs telling stories of the "demon" Spofford and the Melbourne sticky dog.

A Thousand Acres, by Jane Smiley (Simon & Schuster, 4½hrs £12.99)

AN ENGRASSING family saga set on a farm in Iowa. A father has spent his life building up a successful farming business, but he decides to divide it between his daughters before his death. Feuds, resentments and hidden evil threaten to destroy the legacy.

Nicholas Nickleby, by Charles Dickens (Cover to Cover, 3½hrs, £29.99)

ALEX JENNINGS brings the cruel Ralph Nickleby and his horrible Squeers instantly to life. So terrified is the listener that Nicholas is never going to get out of Dotheboy's Hall, that the 24 cassettes soon litter the room like discarded cigarette packets.

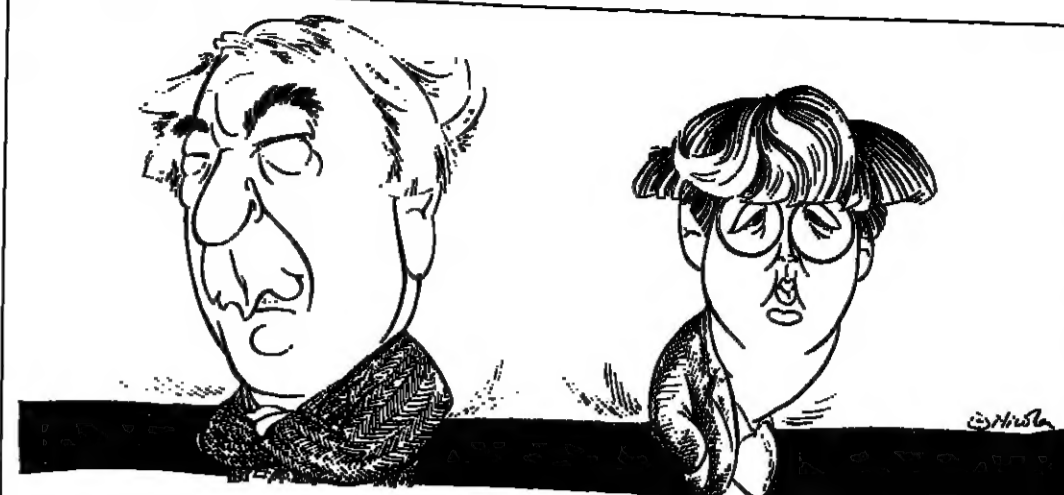
The Black Album, by Hanif Kureishi (Faber/Penguin, 3hrs, £7.99)

A WITTY and colourful examination of Asian student politics in the late 1980s, read by Zubin Varla. Shalabi is an eager young man from Sevenoaks initiated into the Dionysian pleasures of the capital. His struggles with God, Islam and the family are described in Kureishi's familiar, provocative style.

The Piano, by Jane Campion and Kate Pullinger (Argo, 3hrs, £8.99)

A BBC dramatisation of the acclaimed film about a gifted woman thwarted by Victorian society. Ada McGrath (Stella Gonet) becomes mute after a row with her father, and she learns to express herself at the piano. Susan Sheridan plays her illegitimate daughter, Flora, beautifully.

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A difference of poetry

Two great poets praise each other. But disagreement is tucked inside the compliments, writes Ian Sansom

The Spirit Level by Seamus Heaney Faber & Faber 70pp £14.99
New Selected Poems 1968-1994 by Paul Muldoon Faber & Faber 183pp £7.99

REVIEWING Paul Muldoon's second volume of poetry, Mules, in 1977, his one-time tutor Seamus Heaney warned that Muldoon's "hermetic tendency has its drawbacks... and leads him into puzzles rather than poems". Thus the established bard made room for the up-and-coming brain-box without conceding too much but without granting too little: the protégé was good, but a puzzler, not a poet.

It was a shrewd distinction. Over the years Muldoon has become increasingly wayward and brilliant, and Heaney wiser, more hard-boiled, Muldoon's gargantuan Madoc (1990), his first book after his move to America, was poetry like the peace of God — it passed all understanding (and at 261 pages like His mercy endured for ever) — while his 1994 diary-piece *The Prince Of The Quotidian* was a series of mad domestic straggles and strummings and Shining Brow, his opera libretto based on the life of Frank Lloyd Wright, was little more than a cateringing sideshow. Heaney, in contrast, has been purposefully striding centre-stage, recently winning the Nobel Prize for Literature and busy professing poetry in England and America.

Yet the two have always complemented each other, and their new collections — Heaney's *The Spirit Level* and Muldoon's *New Selected Poems* — go together nicely, like cheese and pickle, or a pint and a short: Heaney all creamy and frothy, Muldoon a drop of the hard stuff, best sampled in small measures.

Complemented, then, but not always complimented. In *The Prince Of The Quotidian* Muldoon writes, "The mail brings... a Christmas poem from Doctor Heaney; the great physician of the earth/ is waxing metaphysical, has taken to 'walking on air'." There is a hint of a snort in "Doctor" and a stifled yawn in "waxing metaphysical". Heaney's "Widgion", meanwhile, from Station Island, was dedicated to the young pretender, and suggested that Muldoon's was perhaps a voice not wholly his own: "It had been badly shot/ While he was plucking it/ he found, he says, the voice box —/ like a flute stop/ in the broken windpipe —/ and blew upon it/ unexpectedly/ his own small widgion cries."

The new collections cement the differences. Apparently, *The Spirit Level* was nearly called *Keeping Going*, after the magnificent poem in which Heaney writes about his brother: "I see you at the end of your tether sometimes/ In the milking parlour, holding yourself up... And wondering, is this all? As it was/ In the beginning, is now and shall be? Then rubbing your eyes and seeing our old bruiser/ Up on the byre door, and keeping going." Keeping going is what *The Spirit Level* is really all about: there is the usual rich churning of language ("alabaster, clabber"), and all the usual negotiations and balancing

acts between the personal and the political, the private and the public ("When, for fuck's sake, are you going to write/ Something for us?") asks one inevitable republican interlocutor: "If I do write something/ Whatever it is, I'll be writing for myself," replies the cool poet-narrator. Heaney's is a poetry that is so utterly reliable and reassuring that you just can't gainsay it: it's like motherhood and apple pie. Those who do complain about it always end up sounding churchy, short-tempered, jealous, or mad.

Complaints about Muldoon, on the other hand, seem sane and perfectly justified. He is a peculiarly self-gratifying writer, self-licking almost to the point of obscenity, like a boy who crams his mouth with cakes or plays with himself in public. Yet his playfulness is his great appeal and his sensuousness his saving grace. For all his family reminiscences and friendly anecdotes Heaney sometimes seems far removed from the real world, while Muldoon, though often odd and obscure, seems strangely down-to-earth, connected: interestingly, there are more actual spirit-levels in Muldoon's *New Selected Poems* than there are in *The Spirit Level* (one in "The Workmen's Chorus" from *Shining Brow* — "Hand me up my spirit-level, my plumb-line and my plumb/ Hand me up my spirit-level, or I'll lose my equilibrium" — and another in "The Frog", whose little bulbous eye "matches exactly the bubble/ in my spirit-level"). Heaney tends to drift towards the mystic; Muldoon always follows a certain mad logic.

The new Heaney book is worth reading, out of habit and affection: the Muldoon is worth buying, for a treat.

dom and self-expression. Caro's itinerant and insecure childhood has stripped her of the ability to make an emotional commitment, to allow herself to be fully "known" by anyone; yet she craves a piece of land to call her own and marries Robin not because she loves him but to root herself in the only way she knows how — geographically. Trollope is good on our habit of glamorising the misunderstood outsider, their licence to behave badly bestowed by unhappiness, and neglecting or ignoring those who stolidly, prosaically endure.

Silent endurance carries a price, however, as the Merediths discover when handsome, adored Joe commits suicide. If Caro liked to think of herself as a "nomad", Joe feels trapped by the land and the farm, from which there has never been any possibility of escape. Somewhere between these poles, Trollope has slotted in 19-year-old Zöe, who is a frankly unbelievable creation. An undomesticated, touset-headed tomboy, she arrives uninvited on Robin's farm and embarks on an affair with him because: "Maybe... nobody had ever told Robin that it was OK to have feelings." When Judy returns, fired by jealousy, to make it up with her father, Zöe tactfully absents herself from the scene, having already restored the will to live to Harry and melted Dily's heart. She is just too good to be true.

Trollope makes much of the ineffectual patterns of farming life, a fatality which extends to her characters: Zöe is fascinated "by the rooted inevitable ways of the countryside where weather and seasons presided like gods."

Ironically, this style of rural mysticism, is exactly what Cold Comfort Farm was satirising in the first place. Coming and going like the seasons, "change and loss" make up human life, broods Dily, yet without them there can be no chance of growth. Equally, familial bonds must be broken and recast if the next generation are to become fully adult.

Despite the drama of death and suicide, I was left curiously unmoved by *Next Of Kin*. I found I didn't know anyone well enough to care what happened to them. An Aga saga, however, it is not.

To be fair, there it more to the book than this. Trollope is interested in notions of kinship and rootedness versus personal freedom.

The new Heaney book is worth reading, out of habit and affection: the Muldoon is worth buying, for a treat.

Seasons of despair

Laura Tennant

Next Of Kin by Joanna Trollope Bloomsbury 248pp £15.99

AS FAR as Joanna Trollope is concerned, I am virgin territory. I thought *Next Of Kin* would be entertaining, unputdownable and essentially reassuring. Yes, there would be unhappy love affairs and broken marriages, but the fact that they were being suffered by likeable middle-class people in an attractive village would make them more pleasurable than anything else. I imagined myself reading it in one sitting, curled up on the sofa and laughing and crying in equal measure.

Actually *Next Of Kin* reads more like a tragic recasting of *Cold Comfort Farm*, Stella Gibbons's satire on rural life. The Merediths are a dour, dysfunctional farming family up to their ears in debt. They don't even farm in a nice bit of the country, instead having to put up with the unromantic Midlands. Neither, being tenant farmers, are they real middle class (natriarch Dily's Meredith arranges plates of sandwiches on paper doilies and signposts them to indicate the fillings). I would guess that Trollope has produced a depressingly accurate picture of the practical hellishness of farming life: endless money worries, rising at four for the first milking, the isolation of the small businessman.

Into this clannish set-up (Dily's, her husband Harry, and their sons Robin and Joe) come various interlopers. The book opens with the funeral of Robin's American wife Caro, never really accepted by the tight-lipped Dily's. Their adopted daughter Judy is estranged from her father and has moved to London. Lyndsay, a beautician by training, is Joe's devoted but ineffectual wife. They are all miserable and nobody talks to anybody else, until, that is, madcap, unconventional Zöe, Judy's flatmate, arrives on the scene, with her boyish haircut and plain-speaking ways. Cue *Cold Comfort*-style resolution of everyone's personal problems.

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Writing in tongues

D J Taylor

Babel Tower by AS Byatt Chatto & Windus 617pp £16.99

VIEWERS of last month's BBC Bookmark feature on A S Byatt may recall the clip of a younger version of the author in conversation with Robert Kee. Their subject was *The Virgin In The Garden*, the first volume in Byatt's "planned series" of novels about post-war English life, of which the current offering is the third. Kee's line was the usual plain man's lament levelled at a book of this kind: very clever, Ms Byatt, but wasn't it just a lot of brilliant chatter rather than a deeply felt rendering of human experience? No, Byatt assured him, in the precise and formidably articulated tones for which she is famous, she was trying to write a novel that operated at the highest intellectual pitch while still considering "ordinary" people and the narrative patterns of their lives.

The *Virgin In The Garden* (1978) certainly fits into that category. In fact, at times this chronicle of the self-absorbed Potter family and its two contending sisters, Stephanie

and Frederica, showed every sign of turning into a kind of symbolist masque. Still *Life* (1985), its successor, was less experimental but still managed to double as a debate about signification. These two early novels were amplifications of Frederica's own claim to "understand the fifties". In *Babel Tower* the original cast, with several deletions and many additions, moves onward to 1964-5.

Zeitgeist is in the air. Harold Wilson is on course for Downing Street, the scientists are uncoupling DNA spirals, and the King's Road is pulsating with improbable human traffic. Some of this decade-mongering is a touch obtrusive, but rarely in the way that, to take an obvious comparison, Margaret Drabble's dinner-table exchanges degenerate into a simple inventory.

Frederica, first seen as a gauche schoolgirl, then as a man-eating undergrad, now as an unhappily married mother, finds herself at the centre of this ferment. Still *Life* ended with her hitched to a superannuated public schoolboy "for sex". Five years later, stuck on his placid Herefordshire estate with their small son Leo, knocked (literally) into line, she pines for "freedom", in this case London and work. Escaping to a flat in Bloomsbury and inducted into a career as a freelance lecturer and publisher's reader, she discovers a philosophical semi-vagrant named Jude Mason hanging round her art school. Jude's novel, *Babel Tower* — Tolkien-meets-de Sade in a utopian community that swiftly declines into barbarism — becomes a contemporary *Utopia*.

Meanwhile, as Frederica's divorce loiters towards the courts, and Babeltower proceeds to the Lord Chancellor's office on an obscenity charge, the sixties conveyor belt un-



The me generation... A S Byatt moves her cast into the sixties

winds before us. Daniel, Frederica's brother-in-law, quietly celebrates the repeal of the death penalty. "Ar" is degenerating into a series of "happenings".

In a novel whose subject is transparently order and limitation it was inevitable that Byatt's chief metaphorical vehicle should be language itself. Much of the first half is taken up with the deliberations of a government committee of inquiry into the teaching of English in schools, in which the grammarians and the free expressionists do battle, and if *Babel Tower* has a foundation stone it is the section in which the committee's chairman, Professor Wijnobel, meditates on the nature of linguistic structures.

Beneath the cross-currents of erudition, her own language blows effortlessly along, never effectively perhaps than when describing the cache of pora which a horrified Frederica turns up in Nige's wardrobe: "So much flesh, so very stretched over such muscle, such glosses, so much clean, silky, peachy skin... Such glossy pouts, such tears, such fear, such good fun, a bit of all sorts."

Byatt takes risks in *Babel Tower*, which not only includes huge extracts from Babeltower, but examples of Frederica's readers' reports and her "collaging" (the literary mode of the moment). In a sense, though, the biggest risk was taken at the close of *Still Life* when she killed off Stephanie and left us only the intolerable Frederica. What redeems the surviving sister in the passion to work and create that enables her to endure not only vicious Nigel but a host of minor characters with names straight out of Iris Murdoch (Elvet Gander, Laurence Ounce etc).

Like the Victorian novels to which it is so intimately related, *Babel Tower* ends in court, or rather in two courts, divorce and obscenity. It is a measure of Byatt's narrative skills (that one wants the "wrong" outcomes — Frederica to lose custody of Leo, and Jude's book to be banned. Neither happens. Unquestionably, many who bought Byatt's Booker-winning *Possession* (1990) will be perplexed by this, but it is the better book. It is also a distinguished example of that increasingly popular genre, the anti-sixties novel, and such things are always welcome.

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A ditch runs through it

Paul Evans

WHEN an easterly wind whistles across the Cambridgeshire fens, with its endless wheat fields, mysterious giant sheds and new roads, it rarely touches down on a natural landscape. In the fens, remnants of the pre-engineered, agricultural shop-floor landscape stand as tiny islands — little incongruous buggery on the shaved face of the modern world. In outposts of an ancient wetland, the wind gets tangled in these tufts of willow, birch and reed. Sometimes it thrashes like an invisible beast. Sometimes it sways and ripples. Here is life with an intensity and a significance of its own.

Under the surface of the water in a ditch there's a forest. Layers of vivid green plants grow in a stillness, imperceptibly flowing. Tiny creatures swarm in waterweed dapples. Insects swim between the plants like birds through woodland. Powerful predatory beetles cannon through the branches. Many of these aquatic animals live in both worlds — above and below the water.

On the water's surface the whirligigs, little beetles like beads of polished jet, propel themselves on silver bubbles of air trapped under their bodies. Their spinning bump-car choreography appears aimless. But it's not, it's whirligig nature: a communal dance every bit as sophisticated as our own dizzy propulsions through life.

So much of our perception of nature is limited to surfaces — water, land, sky — that we rarely experience its depth. This is reflected in our dealings with the natural world and is true of conservation. Peering into this ditch at Wicken Fen nature reserve with me is Bill Adams, who lectures in geography at Cambridge university. Bill's book, *Future Nature*, looks, in a similar way, into the depths of nature conservation for a new vision.

Bill argues that although the conservation movement in Britain has been successful in establishing na-



ILLUSTRATION: BARRY LARKINS

ture reserves and some legislation, and we have learned to create and manage ecosystems, it has failed to capture the "otherness", the wildness in nature that gives even the commonplace great significance. Bill is worried that nature will become a commodity — something to be consumed only by those with the means. Or else virtually experienced in cyberspace.

This ditch we're watching has no economic value, and yet it has what Bill describes as "intrinsic interest", an immense value in itself. Although this provides motivation for many conservationists, they find it difficult to articulate and prefer to hide behind the language of science. And scientific language does not communicate these values to people.

Bill believes that we must make space for nature — a cultural space that involves everyone.

In what way is nature significant? Significance is drawn from experience of nature, our values and attitudes. It is also drawn from perceptions of our own human nature being part of a general nature. Many conservationists have extraordinary insights into what significance in nature looks, sounds, smells and feels like. The principal job of conservationists now is to renegotiate the relationship between people and the natural world to uncover essential nature and articulate our relations with it in a way that has a connection with the world as we live it. Can conservation make a space deep enough for nature's future?

Chess Leonard Barden

MANY great players, including both Kasparov and Karpov, have improved their game significantly between the ages of 20 and 21, so the next 12 months could be crucial for the best-ever woman player, Judit Polgar. She will be 20 in July, and is ranked between eight and 11 on world lists.

Polgar disclaims title ambitions, saying that she is content just to do well and provide enjoyment for fans of her imaginative attacking play, but events, coupled with the likely age improvement, could change her viewpoint.

Big-money world title matches are in crisis. Sponsors are dropping out, and too many of the contenders have Russian names starting with K. But Kasparov against Polgar, if it ever became seriously credible, would thrill both media and public.

Polgar notched another notable scalp in the final round of last month's Monaco combined blindfold and rapid-play event.

Polgar-Karpov, Caro-Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Nd7 5 Bc3 5 Ng5 h6? 6 Ne6 is one fashionable idea. Nd6? 6 Nxf6+ 6 Ng5 h6 (Qxd4? 7 Nxf7) 7 N5f3 Bg4 is a more complex line.

Nxf6 7 Nf3 Bg4 8 e3 Qd5 9 Be2 e6 10 h3 Bh5 11 Qb3 After her passive opening, Polgar decides to bail out with a queen exchange, but Karpov enjoys the probes and regroupings of semi-endgames and soon shows he doesn't want to settle for a quick draw.

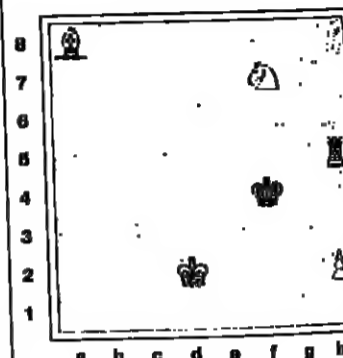
Qb3 12 xxb3 Bd6 13 b4 Ke7 14 g4 Bg6 15 Ne5 Nd5 16 Bd2 f6 17 Nc4 Bc7 18 Na5 Rb8 19 Nb3 a6 20 Ne5 h5 21 Rg1 Kf7 22 g5 Rbe8 23 Bd3 Bxd3 24 Nxd3 e5 25 dxe5 Bxe5 26 0-0-0 g6 27 c4 Ne7 28 gxf6 Bxf6 29 Nc5 b5 30 Ne4 Be5 31 Ng5+ Kg8 32 Bc3 Karpov has manoeuvred patiently, and Bxc3 33 bxc3 bxc4 34 Rd4 Nd5 here would keep his small advantage.

Bf4+? 33 Ke2 bxc4 34 Ne6 Bh6 35 Rd7 Kf7 36 Re1 Bf8 37 Ng5+ Kg8 38 Re6 Rh8 39 Rdx7? Polgar rarely misses a tactical shot. If Bxe7 40 Rxxg6+ Kf8 41 Bg7+ Kg8 42 Bh6+ Kh8 43 Nf7+ Kh7 44 Rg7 mate.

Rxe7 40 Rxxg6+ Bg7 41 Bxg7 Re2+ If Rxxg7 42 Rxxg7+ and 43 Ne6+ 42 Kc3 Rd7 43 Bd4+ Kf8 44 Bc5+ Resigns. If Ke8 45 Rg8 mate, and otherwise White emerges a piece up.

Kasparov v IBM Deep Blue was widely billed as Man v Machine. So, if the giant US corporation is politically correct, the next computer match should be Polgar v Deep Blue — Woman v Machine. Polgar has lost to a DB prototype at quick chess, but even Kasparov finds the machines hard at speed play, so Polgar v DB at classical time limits would be close.

No 2422



White mates in three moves, against any defence (by L. Butler, 1969). Contestants in a German solving championship had 15 minutes to crack this week's problem, but half of them failed. How do you compare? The BK has only one legal move in the diagram.

No 2421: 1 Ra7 d6 2 Rxb7 Kxf6 3 Rh7. Just a version of an old classic that baffled Italian solvers.

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Robson's choice

BOBBY ROBSON became the highest paid British manager in world football when he replaced Johan Cruyff as coach of Barcelona. The 63-year-old Porto manager has signed a two-year contract worth £100,000 a month.

Robson, who came under regular fire during his eight years as England manager, won his battle against cancer last year after a malignant tumor was discovered in his cheek. He has since played a full part in Porto's defence of their league title and established himself as one of Europe's most successful managers.

Meanwhile, Alex Ferguson has agreed a new four-year contract with Manchester United. Ferguson, aged 54, who led United to a second Double earlier this month, had been hoping for a six-year deal to take him up to retirement. His contract, at £50,000 a month, is believed to be one of the most lucrative in the history of British football.

Lancashire's hero as his top score of 63 earned him a thrilling victory. In other matches, Gloucestershire (272-9) beat Hampshire by 21 runs and Surrey defeated Ireland (196-8) by five wickets to go into the last eight. Also through are Northamptonshire, Yorkshire, Kent and Glamorgan.

SURREY batsman Alistair Brown and all-rounders Ronnie Irani and Mark Ealham earned their first international call-ups to the 13-man England squad for the one-day series against India starting this week. Making a comeback are Chris Lewis and Matthew Maynard. The full squad is: Atherton, Brown, Hick, Thorpe, Maynard, Stewart, Lewis, Irani, Cork, Smith, Martin, Gough and Ealham.

BOBBY SIMPSON, who is credited with putting the pride back into Australian cricket, has quit as coach after a disagreement with his cricket board over a new contract. "I'm very disappointed and believe that I am still the best man for the job," said Simpson, who has been replaced by the former Test opener, Geoff Marsh.

The Australians are not on tour at the moment, but Marsh's appointment will take place with immediate effect.

COLIN McMILLAN was taken to hospital suffering from dehydration and exhaustion after narrowly outpointing Jonjo Irwin at Dagenham to regain the British featherweight title he captured five years ago from Gary DeRoux.

"Obviously, there is room for improvement," said McMILLAN later, "but it's a good feeling to have my title back."



TESSA SANDERSON, Britain's former Olympic javelin champion (pictured above), turned back the clock on a rain-drenched afternoon at the Bedfordshire International Games on Saturday when she exceeded the qualifying standard of 60 metres for Atlanta three times.

The 40-year-old is on course to becoming only the second track-and-field athlete in history to have completed in six Olympiads.

TERRY GRIFFITHS of Wales, who won the world snooker title at his first attempt 17 years ago, has retired at the age of 48. He is to become the director of coaching of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, a new post reflecting the worldwide demand for official coaches.

JURGEN KLINSMANN was in record-breaking form as Bayern Munich beat Bordeaux 3-1 in the UEFA Cup final to become only the fourth club to win all three European competitions. Klinsmann's goal was his 15th in the competition this season and it made him the highest scorer in one season's European competition. Further goals from Mehmet Scholl and Emil Kostadinov ensured the Germans won their first European trophy since the mid-seventies. Bayern join Ajax, Juventus and Barcelona as the only clubs to have won all three pieces of European silverware.

HOLDERS Lancashire squeezed a one-wicket victory with one ball remaining over Warwickshire in their Group A tie in the Benson & Hedges Cup clash at Old Trafford. As they went into the match both sides were already assured of a place in the quarter-finals, as they finished first and second in their group.

Warwickshire were given a perfect start by openers Nick Knight and Neil Smith as the side plundered 112 from the first 12 overs, eventually finishing with a formidable 312 for six. Graham Lloyd was

Scottish Cup final

Goal deluge breaks Hearts

Patrick Glenn at Hampden Park

HEARTS supporters who travelled to Hampden Park in buoyant mood on Saturday came away feeling like holiday-makers who discover that their hotel has not been finished.

Among them was Jim Jefferies, a fan since childhood who also happens to be the present manager of the team. He saw his team trounced 5-1 by Rangers. "When Gilles made his mistake to give them their second goal," said Jefferies, referring to a startling blunder by his French goalkeeper Rousset, "I just wanted to get back home. I looked at my watch and it was only 10 past four."

Another 40 minutes and a hat-trick from Rangers' Gordon Durie had to be endured before Jefferies and his fellow sufferers could be released from their ordeal.

Colquhoun's consolation goal for Hearts brought only fleeting relief, as though the torturer had momentarily laid aside the instruments during a change of shifts.

Laudrup, who scored two goals and set up the other three, was Rangers' chief executioner. His first goal, a well-placed shot, broke the deadlock towards the end of a competitive first half. His second arrived five minutes after the interval, a harmless curling cross that Rousset should have picked up as easily as a daisy.

The goalkeeper must already have been looking up to assess his options for releasing the ball when it somehow squirmed through his hands, between his ankles and across the line.

This was a blow that caused Hearts not so much to break as to disintegrate. It was a cruel irony for the Edinburgh club, as Rousset had been one of the most influential figures in their resurgence since his move from Rennes last autumn. It was also the second serious setback of the match for Jefferies's team, whose young captain Locke had departed after only eight minutes with a knee injury. Locke's absence from the right wing-back position forced a reshuffle which upset Hearts' 3-5-2 line-up.

If Laudrup gave way to Durie as interrogator-in-chief it was only in the matter of administering the damaging blow. The Dane remained the most powerful force on the field, supplying the Scotland striker with the passes for all three of his goals.

Rangers' 27th triumph in the country's oldest tournament — this was the 11th final of a trophy first contested in 1874 — could hardly have been more emphatically achieved. Durie's was the first hat-trick in the match since Dhdé Deans's for Celtic against Hibs 24 years ago and only the third in history.

It was Walter Smith's third league and cup double since he succeeded Graeme Souness as manager at Ibrox in 1991. If Celtic's persistent challenge had made the Premier Division championship a test of stamina, the cup proved an unexpected dodder.

Football International friendly: England 3 Hungary 0

Not quite the Wright result England wanted

David Lacey

WITH the European Championship just a couple of weeks away, England manager Terry Venables finds his defensive plans in disarray after this match at Wembley. Injuries to Tony Adams and Gary Pallister helped persuade him to switch to a three-man defence, he has now lost Mark Wright, without whom the system will not work.

Depending on Wright was always a risk, so the knee ligament injury he suffered early in Saturday's match against Hungary came as little surprise.

A broken shin put Wright out of the 1992 World Cup and shortly before the 1992 European Championship he withdrew from the squad with the recurrence of an Achilles tendon problem. He is an accident waiting to happen.

The absence of Wright on the forthcoming Far East tour has increased the chances of Ugo Ehiogu, Gareth Southgate and Sol Campbell finding roles in the European Championship. And Venables will be even more anxious during the coming week to see if Adams is going to make it in time. Yet Adams, like Pallister, is a sound, solid defender at club level who belongs to the maypole school of centre-backs and is danced round in major tournaments.

Fresh uncertainties at the back make it even more imperative that nothing ill befalls Paul Ince in China and Hong Kong. On his protective presence in midfield so much now depends. In fact England did not really get going on Saturday until Ince began to drive forward to link up with Teddy Sheringham.

A profusion of substitutes, five for each team with Walker and Campbell getting their first caps and Alan Shearer putting in a reappearance, reduced the occasion to bathos.

French see red over Cantona

FRENCH football bosses were on Sunday deluged with hate-letters and angry telephone calls after Eric Cantona was left out of the Euro 96 squad by the national trainer, Aimé Jacquet, writes Alex Duval Smith in Paris.

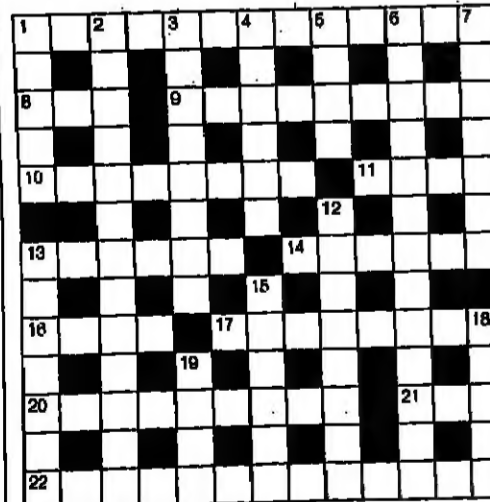
The snub to the Manchester United striker was based on "good sense" and falls in a young line-up that has been unbeaten for 20 matches, Jacquet said. "I have no qualms about my choice. I have

weighed up the merits of all the best French players, including Cantona." The decision came as a shock to French fans proud of Olympique de Marseille's former loose cannon, who is seen as having mastered his temper thanks to British discipline. Last week he became the first Frenchman to inspire a rendition of the Marseillaise at an FA Cup final, when he scored the winning goal. Also out of the French squad is David Ginola of Newcastle United.

Quick crossword no. 315

Across

- 1 Warning that the room is bugged? (5,4,4)
- 8 Eggs (3)
- 9 Vocal sequence (4,5)
- 10 Non-piece (anag) (4,4)
- 11 Member (4)
- 13 Long gumboots (6)
- 14 Progenitor (6)
- 16 Square measure (4)
- 17 Enraptured (8)
- 20 High life (of Egypt) (5-4)
- 21 Grain — whiskey (3)
- 22 Equestrian centre (6,7)



Down

- 1 War-cry or cough (5)
- 2 Fellow barrister (7,6)
- 3 Rope in window frame (4-4)
- 4 Canvas shelter (6)

Last week's solution

STANGE DEMAND
L U P R R
O U T E R D R I D G E
O B O I T T I A R
A I M L O O P A T I A
R P S P
T A R N I O H P D
M I D D
A T L A O D U G A N T
O A P N H A S E
B U P P O R T P A T R
E I S U E I I I
D E L U D E P R E C I O I

Bridge Zia Mahmood

FIRST a simple question. Which of these hands are you more likely to pick up?

- a ♠ None ♥ AKQJ1098765432 ♦ None ♣ None
- b ♠ 92 ♥ Q10943 ♦ 42 ♣ 8762

Now, a slightly harder one. What are the chances that your next hand will have a void? I'll answer the first question at the end of the article. Give it some thought — it's not as obvious as it might appear. The answer to the second is, I believe, about 19.1 against, though no doubt you will correct me if I am wrong. Which leads us to this week's tale of disaster from the big-money game in New York.

South, an expert mathematician who knew to six decimal places the odds against a void, was partnered by the weakest player. His opponents were tough, expert players closely related to the shark family. The stakes were — well, they were such that you would rather not have been South. A lot rather.

But you can afford to sit down with the fiercest if you pick up good cards, and South found himself looking at these:

♠ A1053 ♥ QJ973 ♦ AQ4 ♣ A

He opened one heart, his partner bid two clubs, he reversed into two spades and his partner bid four clubs. South followed the sound tactic of not conducting complex auctions with non-expert partners: he jumped to six clubs. West promptly doubled. North just as promptly redoubled. What would you do now as South?

The mathematical mastermind reasoned thus: "Perhaps West has a club stack, but there's nothing we can do about that. More likely, since West is an expert, his double is the Lightner double asking for a heart lead. He may have the ace-king, he may

have a void. I don't believe he would double with the former, but if he has then I must on no account remove to GNT. If he has a heart void, then perhaps the ruff at trick one will be the only loser we have — my partner must have something for his redouble, after all. Pass looks as though it will maximise our expectation here." The full deal is shown below left.

East led a heart against six clubs redoubled — the eight, to ask for a spade return. West returned one and the defenders merrily crossed ruffed the first five tricks for a penalty of 2,200. This was exactly 10 points fewer than North-South would have scored in 7NT, so the swing was 4,410 points.

Now a third question, the one that South was asking anyone who cared to listen for hours against the hand: what are the odds against both your opponents having a void on the same deal?

The answer to my first question is that you are more likely to pick up hand a. The two hands are equally likely if the pack is properly shuffled, of course. But there is a small chance that someone will have stacked the deck so that you get 13 hearts, while nobody is going to arrange for you to be dealt hand b.

North
♠ KQ
♥ A10
♦ K3
♣ KQJ10987

West
♠ J987642
♥ None
♦ 852
♣ 542

East
♠ None
♥ K8542
♦ J10976
♣ 63

South
♠ A1053
♥ QJ973
♦ AQ4
♣ A